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THE JUGGLER OF NANKIN:

—OR,—

THE GRANDEE'S PLOT.

A Story of the Celestial Empire.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

[CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER XIV.

TSI REPEATS HER EXPERIMENT, AND HAS A WITNESS.

FROM her bed on the morning following Tsi's night watch, it was quite late when the princess arose. She felt much refreshed by her rest and her appetite for breakfast was keen, and as soon as she had performed her toilet she sat down to her meal. While she ate she noticed that her attendant was very downcast and thoughtful, and she inquired its cause.

"If you knew," returned Tsi, "you would not wonder that I am sad. O, I have had such dreams during the past night—such strange, terrible dreams, that I have not got over them. It must have been because I slept so much in the afternoon and evening. Of course I must have been restless through the night."

"But what were your dreams?" earnestly inquired the princess.

"I will tell you when we sit down this forenoon. O, they were very strange dreams. Perhaps you can interpret them for me; and who knows but they may be good dreams after all. I hope they may."

"So do I, for your sake," said Niao.

"But one of them was such a marvellous dream," resumed the maid, endeavoring to appear as free as possible. "I dreamed that I made a certain kind of a beverage which I gave to a dog, and the effect was wonderful beyond measure. So strongly did that dream impress me that I have even prepared the drink this morning, and have resolved to catch one of the dogs that belong about the place, and try the effect upon him. Do not think me foolish, lady."

"O, I shall not call you a fool, my good Tsi," returned the princess, with a smile, "but I do think this smacks a little of folly."

"Yet you are willing I should try the experiment. I will bring the dog up here and try it in your presence. O, the dream was so vivid."

"You say you have the beverage all prepared?" said the princess.

"Yes. It's a curious compound, and after I have tried the experiment, I will tell you how it was made."

Now the princess knew that Tsi was not one to be idly moved by mere whims, and she felt considerable curiosity to see the strange experiment tried—she felt more curiosity than she would have wished her maid to know of; so as soon as the breakfast things were cleared away, she told her maid that she might go down and get the dog. Tsi hastened away below, and there she found any quantity of small dogs the domestics had collected about the place by means of the waste bits of food they had thrown out. She called one of the smallest of the pack, and without difficulty took it in her arms. It was a very small, red-eyed, white-haired animal, of the lap-dog species, and hastening away to be clear from observation, she took it up to her lady's room.

"I hope your concoction will not hurt the little fellow," said the princess, as she stroked the fine hair of the animal.

"I don't know," returned Tsi, hiding her face; "but surely the ingredients *I* put in ought not to do him harm."

The maid left the dog with her mistress, and then went and brought the bowl of tea she had set away in her closet. She took the dog in her lap, and the little fellow placed his nose to the beverage, but would not drink. The princess would have urged that the brute should be set at liberty, but her curiosity was now fully excited and she did not interrupt the girl's movements. As soon as Tsi became satisfied that the dog would not drink she went to the closet and fetched a spoon, and having secured the animal's legs she placed his head between her knees.

"It is curious," she said, looking up at her mistress. "I think I dreamed that the beverage was not drank at first. But wait, my lady, and I am sure we shall see some strange result."

As Tsi ceased speaking she commenced to feed the dog from the bowl with her spoon, nor did she stop until full half of the tea was gone. After this she set the animal down and let him run at liberty upon the floor. He did not seem to like the treatment he had received, but after one or two quite savage growls, and an innumerable number of quaint evolutions, he lay down and began to play with the silken tassels of one of the window curtains.

"How long before you think your charm will begin to operate?" asked the princess, with an incredulous smile.

"I cannot tell," returned the girl, watching the dog narrowly. "I am not *sure* that it will operate at all, but I think it will. If it does not I will never trust to a dream again."

For nearly half an hour the dog lay there and played with the tassels, but at the end of that time he uttered a quick, low whine, and stretched himself out at full length upon the carpet. For a few moments he remained in that position, and then he sprang to his feet and darted across the room. After this he made several circles in his movements, and once more he lay down upon the carpet. His eyes were very bright, and they were fixed on the girl who had given him the drink, with a wild, glaring gaze.

"It begins its work," whispered Tsi, with a shudder.

"It surely does," answered the princess, gazing fixedly on the dog. "But do you not think he suffers?"

Tsi made no reply, for her attention was now wholly taken up by the dog. The little fellow had reached his fore paws forward to their full extent, and his head was resting sideways upon them. It could be seen that his breathing was short, quick and weak, and that his eyes were losing their brightness. Once he made a motion as though he would have arisen, but the effort failed. His limbs were now drawn up, and the motion of his chest grew less and less. There was another low whine—one more movement of the head from side to side—a convulsive heaving of the breast—a nervous gathering up of the feet, and a low struggle, as though he were trying to hold upon his departing breath. A moment he remained thus, and then there was a sudden relaxing of his muscles—his head dropped, he rolled over upon his side, and with one or two slight movements of his sides he settled into rest. There was no more movement—no more gazing of the eyes, for they were half closed and lead-like. The princess started from her chair and approached the spot, and with her foot she moved the inanimate body, but there were no signs of life. Then she stooped down and raised the animal's head in her hands, and a moment's gaze gave the truth to her mind.

"Tsi," she said, in a sad tone, "*the dog is dead!*"

The maid covered her face with her hands, but made no reply.

"It was a cruel experiment," the princess continued, "for I would not harm even a dog. I am sorry you did it, but it cannot be helped now, so you need not mourn over it. Come—I did not mean to chide you. I do not blame you, good Tsi. Do not let it affect you so."

The girl raised her head and looked into her lady's face.

"Come," resumed Niao, in a kind, persuasive tone, "you need not feel bad about it, but tell me now what was your dream?"

"O, it was a terrible dream," uttered Tsi, again covering her face, and shuddering.

"But what was the nature of the drink you prepared?"

"Wait a moment, and I will tell you," said the girl. She looked up as she spoke, and after gazing for a moment upon her mistress she looked upon the dog. She was evidently trying to gather strength for the task before her. She was determined to hold the fearful secret no longer, for it was now time that the whole should be known.

"Lady," she said, moving close up to her mistress, and speaking almost in a whisper, "you must prepare your soul for a story that will come upon you terribly. Since we have been in this house I have watched every movement. I slept last evening so that I might watch through the night. I did watch. That bowl which stands there upon the table is the same one which I carried into your chamber when you retired last night!"

The princess stretched forth her hand and laid it upon her companion's arm.

"*I* drank from that bowl!" she whispered, turning pale as death.

"No," quickly returned Tsi. "You have not tasted *that* beverage. I changed your bowl before you drank. There was danger about you, but my eye was not removed from you till you were safe."

Niao trembled violently, but the color came back to her face. For some moments she gazed into her companion's face without speaking. She seemed to be fearful of trusting her speech. She dared not ask the question that trembled upon her lips, for she was fearful that the truth might be more dreadful than the suspicion she already tried to entertain. She tried to think of some one whom she had wronged, and who might thus be led to seek revenge, but she could not remember of a living being who had ever received wrong at her hands.

"Tsi," she at length said, with all the power she could command, "tell me what you have seen."

"You are strong—and will not sink beneath the knowledge, for you are safe."

"Speak on. I am ready."

Tsi hesitated but for a moment, and then she told what she had seen on the first night—of the departure of a man from the chamber—of her suspicions respecting the tea, and of her subsequent experiment upon the cormorant. Then she told of all that she had seen on the night last past, save that she did not mention the name of the man who had done the deed.

"I removed the tea as soon as I could," she said in conclusion, "and in its place I put some which I had prepared for the purpose. I kept the beverage which I took from your side, for I was resolved that there should be no room for doubt. You have seen its power, and you know what would have been the result had you drank it."

The princess was not thunder-struck, nor was she filled with terror. She seemed to have no feeling beyond a dull, painful fear—a fear that seemed rather to suspend mental action and leave a chill upon the soul.

"You saw not the man's features?" she at length whispered, gazing half timidly up into her companion's face.

"Yes, I saw them plainly."

"Ah. Did you recognize them?"

"Yes."

"And were not mistaken?"

"There was no room for mistake, for the rays of the light shone full upon them."

"Could you tell me who it was?"

"If you would wish to know."

"Tell me."

"It was—the Prince Kong-ti!"

"My husband?"

"Yes."

"There could be no mistake?"

"No, mistake were impossible. It was he who poisoned your tea, and whom I afterwards heard conversing with Li beneath the window of this room."

The princess arose from her chair and stood over her maid. There was at first something almost like a smile upon her lips, but in a moment more 'twas gone, and the features grew rigid as marble. She laid her hands upon Tsi's head, and attempted to speak, but could not. Then a low, sharp cry broke from her lips, and she sank down upon the floor utterly insensible. The faithful maid sprang to her side and lifted her up, and with considerable exertion she raised her upon a silken couch that stood beneath the window. She did not call for help, for she dared not trust the secret with others, so she resolved to do the work of resuscitation herself.

After she had placed her mistress upon the couch she hastened for water, and by repeated exertions she at length succeeded in bringing the unfortunate woman back to life. Niao opened her eyes and looked up, and made signs to be raised to a sitting posture. After this she gazed upon her attendant with a wild, haggard look.

"Are you better?" asked Tsi, still bathing the lady's temples.

"Better?" repeated the princess, casting her eyes slowly about the room, as though she sought something which she had not yet forgotten. They at length rested upon the body of the ill-fated dog. "It is all real!" she continued, speaking in a hoarse whisper. "I heard it all aright. There was poison, Tsi—poison in my drink—and—my husband put it there!"

"He did, most surely," said the maid, bending down and smoothing back the hair from the sufferer's pale brow. "And now we must act. As soon as you can grow calm we will think the matter over. Of course you now know that the prince wishes you out of the way."

"Yes. He loves another!" groaned the heart-stricken wife.

"Perhaps he does. But let that pass now. Do you not think it would be best to flee from this place as soon as possible? You know the prince's power, and you know now what his will is in regard to yourself. If you can make your escape you may at least live."

It was sometime before the princess spoke, but when she did speak she had grown more calm, and her voice, though weak and low, was yet firm and decided.

"Alas, my good, faithful friend," she said, "you have saved me, and to your judgment I will trust. Do as you think best, and I shall not object. I have nothing to live for now, but life was given me as a blessing by a power I dare not thwart, and I will not throw it away. Though all is dark as the grave to me now, and though the remainder of my life must be spent in the valley of sorrow and sadness, yet I would not die, but I will live and pray for him who has so basely wronged me. What shall we do?"

"I will tell you," replied the maid, who was much relieved at finding her mistress so calm. "All day yesterday, Li was watching you most nervously, and he was most assuredly looking for the effect of the poison that had been placed by your bedside. This morning he came to me and wished to see you, but I told him you had not yet arisen, and rather gave him to understand that you were not well. Now there will evidently be a watch set upon you to day. You shall retire to your bed, and if you are called for, I will state that you are not well enough to be seen. I will give out that you are seized with a wonderful malady, and that the very sight of visitors turns your brain. If we can thus keep matters along until to-night, we will take the cover of the darkness and flee."

The princess promised to be governed entirely by the faithful Tsi's will, and shortly afterwards she allowed herself to be undressed and assisted to her bed. After this the maid concealed the body of the dog, and then set about preparing for the object she had in view.

During the forenoon three messengers arrived at different times from Nankin to inquire after the health of the princess, and to each one Tsi gave the same answer: Her mistress could not be seen, for she was very sick. Towards the middle of the afternoon the prince himself came, and to him Tsi gave the same answer.

"You had better not think of seeing my poor lady," she urged, tearing her hair in great grief, "for the very sight of any one makes her worse. Perhaps in the morning she may be better. Will you not come then?"

Kong-ti was not very strenuous. He tried to make it appear that he wept, and after bidding the girl be very careful and attentive he took his leave.

The day wore slowly away, and when the shades of night had fairly settled around the great building Tsi sought the side of her mistress. Niao was very calm now, and she arose from her bed and put on the garb of a fisherman her companion had procured. Tsi was clothed in a dress of the same description, and thus disguised they moved out into the drawing-room. Here Niao took what money she had, and then noiselessly followed her maid from the apartment. They reached the hall without notice, and with quickly beating hearts they crept through an open window upon the low verandah, and from thence they stepped down into the garden.

The stars were shining brightly in the clear heavens, and the fresh breeze was playing mildly with the flower-decked foliage. The two women noticed not the dampness that came up chill from the marsh—they only bent their ears eagerly for a few moments to be assured that no one watched them from behind, and that the way was clear ahead, and then they glided swiftly away by one of the hedge-grown walks that led towards the road.

CHAPTER XV.

AN UNLUCKY TRADE.

ON the next morning after Paul had landed from the dismasted vessel he arose very early, and having obtained from Yu-lu a promise that she would not leave the room until he came back he went forth to see if he could find suitable horses for his journey. Anything, almost, with fair strength, would answer for himself, but he wanted an easy, gentle beast for Yu-lu. He went out first into the stable, but he found nothing there for sale. The man, however who had charge of the place, and who, for a wonder, was awake, directed him to the house of a man who would be likely to have some beasts for sale, and at the same time gave the information that said man, whose name was Fou-chang, was the only person in the place who kept horses. The house was pointed out to our hero, it being in sight, and about half a mile distant, and with quick steps he hastened away. He was not long in reaching the place, and as he approached the open yard in front of the building he saw a man holding two horses by the bridles.

"Is this Fou-chang?" asked the youth, as he came up and looked, first at the two horses, and then at him who held them. The animals were good-looking beasts, and took our hero's eye at once.

"Suppose I am Fou-chang?" returned the man, eyeing Paul sharply.

"Why, I have been directed to you as one who might sell me horses."

"Ah, yes. And how many would you want?"

"Two will answer."

"Well, I've got horses. Here's two, for instance. If you want them very much, perhaps I might accommodate you."

"I do want them very much, and I should like them at once. Are these animals kind?"

"One of them is. That one, now, a woman could ride—just the most gentle creature living."

"Just what I want. I want one for myself, and one for a boy who is with me."

"Well, there isn't much difference between a boy and a woman as far as horses are concerned," said the man, with something like a smile upon his features. "But suppose we can trade, when should you want them?"

"Immediately."

"Then you want to be on the road at once?"

"Yes. The horses will evidently suit, and you may set your price."

"O, you'd better try them first. Never make a blind bargain, sir, especially in horse-flesh. Now suppose you just mount this one—this kindest one, and I'll take the other—you came from the inn?"

"Yes."

"Well, we'll ride down there, and that will tell you something what they are. Just you hold the reins while I run in and tell the folks where I am going."

Paul took charge of the horses, and the man hurried into the house, but he soon returned, and then our hero mounted the animal which had been pointed out to him as the most kind and gentle. He found the beast to be all he could wish, and he could not but congratulate himself on the success of his errand for he was resolved to buy both the horses let the price be what it might, knowing that he could sell them again at Shanghai.

When they reached the door of the inn Paul dismounted, and the horse-dealer did the same.

"I will take them if your price is not too exorbitant," the youth said.

"O, there wont be any trouble about the price," returned the other. "But suppose your boy comes out and tries his beast? Then you'll be sure, you know."

"Never mind that," said Paul, rather tartly, for he began to be anxious to get rid of the fellow. "I want the horses, and if you will sell them I will buy them."

"Certainly I'll sell them. For that which you rode I want three golden ounces, and for the other I want two golden ounces and five pieces of silver."

Paul at once accepted the offer, and having paid the money, he led the horses around to the stable, and there gave orders for them to be kept in readiness, as he should want them in a very short time. He took no more notice of the fellow of whom he had bought the animals, but as soon as he had seen them safely cared for, he hastened to the room where he had left Yu-lu. He found her there, but she was pale as marble, and trembled fearfully.

"Yu-lu—my love—what has happened?" cried the youth, springing forward and laying his hand upon the maiden's arm.

"Lost! lost!" she groaned. "O, Paul, my own dear Paul, we are lost!"

The youth started up in terror. He saw that Yu-lu could have no groundless fears, and his own heart began to sink within him.

"What is it?" he asked. "What has happened since I have been away?"

"*Li! Li is here!*" she replied, gazing furtively about as she spoke.

"Li here?" repeated Paul. "Do you mean the prince's own man?"

"Yes. He is Kong-ti's only male confidant. O, Paul, you did not know him?"

"I have not seen him."

"Not seen him!" uttered Yu-lu, gazing up in astonishment. "That was he who rode by your side!"

"What! but now?"

"Yes."

"And of him I bought the horses—and to him I spoke of my boy!" groaned the youth, sinking into a chair. "But," he added, in a moment afterwards, "perhaps he does not know me."

But such a hope was not long to remain with Paul Ardeen, for he well remembered how the man had eyed him, and how he had hung about him. Yet that circumstance, be it as it might, could have no effect. He must escape from the place as quickly as possible, and that, too, without being seen by Li, for he would surely recognize Yu-lu if he were to see her face. His greatest fear was, that he should not be able to get at his horses, for he had reason to believe that Li was watching in the stable. He told his thoughts to his companion, and she urged him to flee from the place at once.

Paul pondered upon the subject a few moments, and then he crept out into the narrow hall, for from the back window of this place he could see the stable. He looked out and saw Li still standing there, and he could now see that the fellow was anxiously watching for something. He saw at once that to attempt to obtain his horses would be not only useless but really dangerous, so he returned to Yu-lu and bade her prepare at once to set off.

"It is no use," he said, "to think of obtaining our beasts, for Li is on the watch there. We must glide carefully out at the front door, and hasten off towards the wood which flanks the edge of the lake beyond the little river. Perhaps we may yet escape."

Yu-lu made no reply, but with quick movements she prepared herself, and in a few moments she was ready. The youth examined his pistols very carefully, and having seen that the caps were dry and clean, and that the tubes were filled, he placed them so that they could be easily reached, and then moved carefully out into the narrow hall. Yu-lu clung closely to his arm, and he could almost hear the quick beating of her heart, for he plainly felt its pulsations against his arm. He looked down the steep, ladder-like stairs, and saw that the way was clear.

"Courage," he whispered, as he began to descend the stairs. "Let us hope for the best, but have our hearts prepared for the worst. If we can only get clear from this house."

"I am strong," returned Yu-lu. "Look only to yourself, and lead the way."

Paul returned a look of gratitude, and with a steady step he kept on. The lower hall was reached, and yet they were alone and unobserved. The yard was clear, and our hero stepped forth from the door. The stable was back of the house, so that they could not be seen from that source, and if Li only remained by the horses, as he probably would, the chances of escape were almost equal with those of detection. The road, which was only a few yards from the house, was flanked by hedges of yellow rose-trees, and under cover of this hedge Paul hoped to make his way. A single instant he stopped in the yard to see that he was not noticed, and then he glided forth to the road. The hedge was reached, and keeping close beneath it the fugitives hastened on. The path that led to the river was reached, the river itself was crossed, and in fifteen minutes more they were under cover of the thick wood that lined a section of the shore of the lake. Here they stopped to take breath and listen, but no following footsteps were heard.

Paul considered a few moments upon the subject of the direction he should take. He saw a path that led up through the woods from the lake, but he dared not take it, for in case of pursuit that path would be sure to be followed, so he struck off through the trackless wild, taking his course about northeast. There was little underbush, and with care they made comparatively easy progress. At the distance of about five miles they came to an open section through which ran the imperial canal. They had to walk over a mile before they found a bridge by which they could cross, and after crossing this they had no more woods to conceal them, save now and then a clump of tallow trees that were cultivated by the neighboring peasants. A number of low huts were seen scattered about over the even country, but Paul chose not to trust to any of them for shelter, hoping that he might find some safer retreat before noon.

Nearly three hours must now have elapsed since they left the inn, and Paul judged that he was at least ten miles from the place of departure; but the way ahead looked not so inviting as he could have wished, for the whole country, for miles around, was nearly level, and even were he to leave the road and strike off into the fields, it would not avail him anything towards concealment. But with a brave heart he kept on, and Yu-lu assured him that she was not yet fatigued.

Another hour passed, and yet no pursuers were seen, and Paul almost began to hope that there might have been some mistake.

"Yu-lu," he said, "are you sure that it was Li whom you saw at the inn this morning?"

"Of course I am," the maiden replied. "There is no mistaking him."

"I had feared we should have been followed ere this, if such had been the case."

"It was surely Li," Yu-lu repeated. "But," she added, with a sudden beam of hope, "perhaps he did not, after all, hold any suspicions concerning you."

"Perhaps not," added Paul. "And yet," he continued, in a thoughtful mood, "why should he have sold me the horses? A man in his position would not surely be trading horses about the country. If that was Li he must surely have had some suspicions. The intelligence of our flight could only have come from the woman Lau, and of course the pursuers would have a description of my person. They must be after us ere this, but have probably taken the wrong track."

Just as Paul ceased speaking a sharp cry broke from Yu-lu, and with a trembling movement she pointed towards the canal. The youth looked back and saw two horsemen upon the bridge he had crossed. They were at least five miles distant, and though they seemed but mere moving specks, yet there was no doubt that they were horsemen. Paul knew that himself and companion could not be seen at that distance, and there was yet time for concealment. At the distance of less than a quarter of a mile, and standing some rods from the road, there was a peasant's cot. It was the only place in view that could possibly be reached in season, for the horsemen were surely on the road they were travelling, and towards that cot they started. When they reached it they found no one there save an old woman, who informed them that her husband and son, the only other occupants, were at a distant garden by the canal at work in a tea-patch.

Paul had no time for extended consideration, and he knew that the woman would be governed more rigidly by gratitude than by any fear that could be forced upon her.

"My good woman," he said, speaking frankly and quickly, "we are two unfortunate people who have had the misfortune to be persecuted because we helped to rescue a poor girl from the hands of a villain. We are even now pursued. Give us a shelter, and save us from the villains who would capture us, and your reward shall be ample. We will give you gold—four pieces of bright, pure gold."

The woman's eyes sparkled, and she put forth her shrivelled hand. Paul valued not the gold, but he would be sure of the woman's meaning before he gave it to her.

"Will you conceal us?" he asked.

"Yes," the woman returned.

"And if our enemies should come and inquire for us, what would you tell them?"

"That would depend upon what kind of men they were, and how they should ask. For four golden pieces I can afford to tell a lie, for then I can pay for Buddha's pardon."

Paul was satisfied that the woman meant to do the best she could, and without further questioning he asked her to lead the way to a place of concealment. She thought a few moments, and then she went to a place in the floor where there was a joint in the rough boards, and raised a small trap-door.

"Here," she said, "is a small cellar under here which we use for keeping tallow. As soon as you are down I will pull an old reed mat over the place, and they will never find it, for I don't know of another such place about here."

There was a rough ladder led down to the bottom of the place, and having descended first himself, Paul turned and assisted his companion. The door was then replaced, and then our hero heard the mat drawn over. It was utterly dark there, but by no means damp or uncomfortable. Our friends found places to sit down, and ere long afterwards they heard the sound of horses' hoofs in the yard. Soon there came the tramp of feet upon the floor overhead—the feet of two men, certainly—and Paul and Yu-lu could hear every word plainly. The first speaker was at first recognized as Li.

"Hi, woman," he cried, "have you seen two persons go by here this morning?"

"Yes, I think there have been a number by," returned the woman.

"Ah, who were they?"

"Some folks that work down by the canal."

"But have you seen none go the other way? Haven't you seen two people—a young man and a boy—go the other way?"

"No, sir."

"Nor there have not any such called here?"

"Yes. There were two such called here about an hour ago. They stopped and got some water, and then went off towards the great river."

"Towards Kiang-yin?"

"No. They left the road, and crossed the marsh, back of us here, and kept on to the northward. They were in a great hurry."

"They were on foot, were they?"

"Yes, and looked very tired. Poor folks! if you could overtake them and give them a ride 'twould be a blessing, for they looked like innocent youths."

"Innocent like snakes!" growled Li.

"But they wasn't surely wicked people," said the old woman, with perfect assurance.

"Never mind," said Li. "Right off to the northward, you say?"

"Yes. Across the marsh by the left hand path. They must be half way to the river by this time. But you are not going yet."

"Yes, my good woman."

"But stop and eat something."

"No."

"I've got some wine."

"We well taste a bit of that."

"That's right," said the woman, arising and moving across the floor. "Poor dear youths! They wanted me, if any body came and inquired after them, to detain 'em as long as I could."

"They did, eh?" cried Li. "But never mind. Hurry with your wine, and we'll make up for the lost time."

The wine was soon brought, and quickly drank, and in a few moments more Paul heard the horses gallop away. As soon as the sound died away in the distance the trap-door was raised, and Paul and his companion came up. He thanked the old woman for the service she had done him, and after paying her the gold he had promised, he asked for some kind of refreshment. This she brought quickly forward and placed upon a small table where the wine already stood, and Paul and Yu-lu sat down.

"*Hi-yah! There are three paths over the marsh, old woman. Which one did*—"

The voice stopped short. Paul leaped from his chair, and saw Li standing at the window! Quick as thought he snatched a pistol from his bosom, and raised it, but Li detected the movement and dodged out of sight.

"We are lost!" groaned Yu-lu, clinging half frantically to her lover's bosom.

"Not yet," uttered Paul. "Courage, dearest. Let me have my arms free."

Yu-lu sprang back, for she saw that she was encumbering her lover's arms, and on the next instant the door that led to the entry was seen to open just a crack. Paul would have darted towards it, but at the same moment there came the sharp report of a pistol, and the youth felt a sudden pang in his head. It was a sharp, ringing, burning sensation, and while he strained his eyes towards the door a thousand varied lights seemed dancing before him. He staggered forward a few paces, and then he knew that Yu-lu had caught him in her arms.

"Paul! Paul!" she cried. "Speak to me—O, speak!"

But he could utter no words. He had a dim sense of pain in his head, and a faint confused idea of soft arms clasping him about. Again he heard the sound of that sweet voice in his ear, and then he knew that he was sinking down upon the floor. Another quick succession of sparkling lights seemed to flash before his eyes, and after that everything was dark and cold.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN PRISON.

When Paul Ardeen came to himself he was in a very small place, and the light came to him through a grated door. The walls of the room were of wood, and the ceiling and floor were of the same materials. He knew that he was in a prison, and from the din that came rumbling through the air he concluded that he must be in a large city. His first movement, as soon as he had fully recovered his senses, was to feel of his head, for he felt a dull pain there. He found it bandaged, and after considerable reflection and examination he found, that he was not seriously injured. He remembered the firing of the pistol through the crack of the door, and of the subsequent sensations he had experienced. The ball must have hit his skull just above and back of the temple, and glanced off without penetrating the bone. There must have been considerable contusion, but Paul knew from the sensations he experienced that he was in no danger. As soon as his mind was satisfied upon this point he turned his attention to other matters.

At first there came a sort of dream-like vision before him, and when his mind struggled forth into the reality he remembered the maiden who had been with him during his exciting flight. With both hands pressed hard upon his brow he sat back upon the little frame that served him as a bed, and sobbed deeply. Physical weakness had taken away much of his strength of nerve, and his bitter sorrow ran riot in his soul. He thought of Yu-lu—of how she had smiled upon and trusted him—of how she had shone like a torch of heaven in his path—and he felt how much he had lost. He remembered—he felt—how mighty was his love for that gentle being—how it had penetrated every avenue of his thoughts and feelings—how it had entered into his very life, and become part of his soul. He thought of all this, and utter wretchedness overwhelmed him like an angry sea. He was sunken in a darkness so dense and deep that not even a thought of day came to bless him. If his thoughts did at length turn to where hope should have had a home, he thought only of the almost unlimited power of him who had stricken him with the blow.

It might have been half an hour after Paul had fully recovered himself that he heard footsteps approaching his cell, and ere long an armed soldier stopped in front of the grated door and looked in. He was a filthy, greasy-looking fellow, and on his shoulder he carried a gun-like contrivance that might at first sight have been taken for a small iron cannon which had been rusted down to about half its original size, and then set in a stock.

"Hi!" the fellow exclaimed, setting down his heavy piece of ordnance, and looking in upon the youth. "So you're up again. What a time you've had."

Paul arose from his couch and approached the door, and the Chinaman made a motion as though he would bring his weapon to a favorable position for shooting.

"Where am I?" was Paul's first question.

"In prison, I think," replied the guard.

"But in what place?"

"Close by the canal of Yang-tchi."

"But am I in Nankin?"

"Yes."

"And how long have I been here?"

"This is the third day," said the fellow, after counting the great yellow buttons upon his vest.

"Has the prince seen me?"

"Yes."

"Do you know what he means to do with me?"

The fellow grinned a sort of grim, dubious grin, and bobbed his head like a game-cock—and that was all the answer he gave. Paul repeated the question, but it was only answered by another bob of the head. A third time he asked the same question, and this time the Chinaman seemed indignant that his silent answer had not been understood, for with an angry grunt he bobbed his head once more, and then drew his hand significantly across his throat. He stopped just long enough to see that he was now understood, and then moved along.

After the sentinel was gone, Paul went back to his couch and sat down. He now knew the fate that was intended for him, but it was not the coming of death that moved him the most. The dread of the executioner was overcome by another emotion. He could only see the pale face of Yu-lu, and think that she, too, was suffering. After a while the youth went to the door and looked out through the grated aperture. He could see that he was some distance from the ground, and that opposite to him, about a dozen yards distant, was a blank, massive wall. He had seen many Chinese prisons, where all the cells looked into a common yard, and he knew that he was now in no common prison, for he was cut off from all view of his fellows, save the single sentry that guarded him, and it was evidently intended that he should have no opportunity for communication. It was surely a dismal prospect.

It must have been late in the afternoon when reason had come to Paul's mind, for ere long after he had left the door the shades of night began to settle over the prison, and just at the time when the dusk begins to grow thicker with darkness the sentinel stopped at the door and handed in a bottle and a cake of rice bread. The former he found to contain water, and the bread he was obliged to soak before he could eat it, and even then it was fulsome stuff. He only forced down what nature actually required, and then sat the remainder upon the floor. He had hardly taken his seat upon the edge of the cot ere he heard the sound of steps approaching his cell, and shortly afterwards his door was opened. The last glimmer of evening just revealed the outlines of the intruder, and in the tall straight form that stood against the background of space made by the open door, Paul recognized the Juggler of Nankin.

"Is this Paul Ardeen?" the juggler asked, as he approached the cot.

The prisoner answered in the affirmative. He spoke tremblingly, for he felt like one who had done wrong, and for the first time the thought came to him that his having evaded the juggler was the direct cause of all he had since suffered.

"Do you remember when you stopped at the small inn on the western shore of the Tai-hou lake?"

"Yes," returned the youth.

"You had a boy with you?"

"Yes."

"Did you know that I was there at the same time?"

Paul hesitated for a moment, but it was not his nature to deliberately falsify, and he admitted the truth.

"Then you saw me, and went away on purpose to escape me?" said Ye-fo-hi.

"I confess that I did."

"Alas, Paul, you know not what you have done!" The old man spoke in a very strange, sad, tone, and as he spoke he sat down upon the cot by Paul's side. "Do you not remember the promise you made me?" he continued. "Do you not remember the compact you made with me?"

"Yes."

"Then why should you have fled from me?"

"Because I feared you," answered the youth, after a moment's thought.

"Feared me! And what have I ever done that you should fear me? What have I said in your presence, or what suggested, that could have awakened such a thought in your bosom?"

"I cannot explain, sir," replied Paul, with evident embarrassment. "I can only tell you that I saw you come into the yard, and that both I and my companion feared you. For myself, sir, I should have had no fear, but for another's sake I even broke my promise with you—for that other's sake I would have even given up life itself."

"I have heard of your mishap," said Ye-fo-hi, "and I know whom you had with you."

"You do?" uttered Paul, starting up with excitement.

"Yes."

"And can you tell me what has become of my companion?"

"She is with the Prince of Nankin."

Paul Ardeen only groaned aloud, and sank back upon the cot. He covered his face with his hands, and the old man could hear that he was sobbing heavily.

"Paul," spoke the juggler, at the same time laying his hand upon the young man's shoulder, "you have wronged me most deeply, but I will not chide you, for I know how much you now suffer. When I set you to watch over the movements of the prince, I hoped you would be faithful to the trust I reposed in you. Had you done that, all would have been well. I could have led you clear from all danger, and you should have lost nothing that you could have hoped to gain. It was a hold upon the prince I wanted, and even had I gained possession of the maiden you found, and even had I led her into the very presence of the prince, you should not have lost her."

"O, sir! Can you not save her now?" cried Paul, springing up and clasping his hands.

"I do not know. The prince is very powerful, and he now holds the maiden in his own hands. His own wife, I have heard, is dead. If he makes Yu-lu his wife your hopes of her are gone."

"O, heaven have mercy!"

"And then your own situation is not at all enviable," resumed the juggler.

Paul started at the words, and for a while his mind was drawn to the subject thus broached.

"Do you know what my fate is to be?" he whispered.

"It is not hard to guess," returned the other. "You are placed here to die. I know well what silent language these walls speak. When you are led forth from here it will be to die, and you will have but little warning of the coming fate."

"And is there no power to save me?" the youth asked. "O, if you could but get word to my countrymen at Shanghai, they would come and take me away. Can you not send them intelligence of my situation?"

"It would take nearly a week, at least, to bring the English here," said the juggler; "and your fate will surely be decided before that time. But let that rest for the present. I will help you if I can. I have gained admittance here by working upon the superstition of the guard, but I could not get you out, for the poor soldiers will not sacrifice their lives even to me. But for all that I may help you. Now tell me of what you found at the temples. Of course you cannot fear to trust me now."

Paul knew full well that no harm could come of his revealing the truth to his companion, and he hoped that if he was frank now it might work to his own good, so he commenced and related all that he had seen and done at the ruined temples, even to his first interview with Yu-lu, and the growing of the love which had taken such a hold upon his heart. He could not see the juggler's face, but he could tell that he was much affected, for ever and anon sharp, ejaculatory sentences would break from his lips.

"Kong-ti is a great villain!" uttered Ye-fo-hi, after Paul had concluded. "O, I wish you had trusted me, for then we might have thwarted him."

"Do not blame me," groaned the youth. "It was for Yu-lu's sake I acted as I did, for she feared you. We both of us had an instinctive fear that to answer your own ends you might place her again within grasp of the wicked prince."

"It is passed now," resumed the juggler, "and we must do the best we can. I do truly wish to save you, and I will if I can."

"And Yu-lu?" whispered Paul.

"If the Princess Niao lives I can save her, but if the princess be truly dead, then I fear there is little hope. But we must trust to time."

"Do you know Yu-lu?" the youth asked.

"I have seen her."

"And do you know the princess?"

"Well."

"The princess is related to you?"

"Ah, who told you that?"

"I heard it so whispered."

"I meant not that such a fact should have leaked out. But it can make no difference now. Niao is a noble woman, and she has been most basely wronged, and if it lies in my power she shall be revenged."

"Are you going to leave me?"

"I must, for my time has expired. But do not give up in total despair, for I think I can save your life. If it came within the reach of my power, even though half the soldiers in Nankin died in consequence, I would lead you forth from here now; but I cannot. The guard is very strong and resolute, and they are not to be overcome by any art of mine. Be assured that I will not lose sight of you."

Paul started up from the cot and seized the juggler by the arm.

"Save Yu-lu if you can!" he cried, with all the energy of his soul. "O, save her, and then my own liberty will be worth the having."

"You may hope for yourself," returned Ye-fo-hi.

"But Yu-lu is more than myself. She is the light of my soul—the joy of my heart, and without light and joy life were but little else than a burden."

The juggler made no reply. Paul would have given much to have seen his face even, but the darkness hid it, and its emotions were all hid, and in a moment more the youth was alone. He heard the retreating footsteps of his visitor, and when they at length died away he threw himself upon his hard couch. For a while he pondered upon what had passed, but he did not ponder long, for the emotions he had experienced worked hard upon his mind, and weakness overcame him. His sorrows and his cares were lost in unconsciousness. He felt a wild, dizzy sensation, but no pain, and with the attempt to grasp a phantom which imagination had hung in the air before him, he sank back into the rest of forgetfulness.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PLOT IS ON ITS LEGS AGAIN.

The Prince of Nankin walked up and down his apartment with quick, nervous strides. He was much agitated, and a casual observer would have needed no interpreter to tell that the powerful grandee was suffering from more than usual anxiety. His face was pale, and his lips were compressed with a powerful effort to keep back the feelings that welled up from his soul. The beautiful Yu-lu was once more in his power, but he was far from satisfied with the position in which he was placed. His plot had been interrupted—it had not worked as he had intended. A few days ago, and he thought his plans were all moving smoothly on, but now a storm had come, and the fabric of his long cherished plot was in danger of tumbling in pieces about his ears. He still held the tottering fragments up, but they bore hard upon him.

Thus was he pacing to and fro across his apartment, when Li entered his presence. He stopped as soon as he noticed his devoted servant and started towards him.

"Ha! Back so soon?" he uttered.

"Yes," returned Li, moving to a seat and placing his body in it.

"And what of Niao? Have you gained any trace of her?"

"Yes."

The prince started at this answer—a quick flush suffused his face, and then he also sat down.

"Speak," he said, in breathless anxiety. "Tell me what you have learned."

"Last night," commenced Li, "I went to the house where we left her, but none of the servants had heard from her. I searched through the neighborhood most of the night, and when I returned to the house this morning a letter had been left there for you. No one knew who left it, or at what hour it was left. It was found tied to the handle of the outer door by the porter, and he gave it to me. It was not sealed, and I read it, and I thought it best to place it in your hands as soon as possible."

As Li ceased speaking he drew the letter from his pocket and handed it to his master. It was written upon a piece of silk with India ink. The prince opened it and read as follows:

"*To the most high and mighty Prince Kong-ti:*—The good Princess Niao is dead! The very night after you last saw her she was seized upon by an evil spirit which stole away her reason. In this mood she arose from her bed and rushed from the house. I followed her, but she would not listen. She went to the great lake, and there she raved as one having a heavy soul, nor would she suffer me to approach her. She spoke to Tien-tan to take her spirit, and to Tee-tan she gave her body. She threw herself into the lake, and the dark waters closed over her. We shall see her no more. I would have come to you, but I feared your wrath. This is written by your most unworthy slave, Tsi."

"Do you believe that?" uttered the prince, after he had read the missive through the second time.

"It may be true," returned Li. "I think it is true. The beverage she drank may have made her crazy."

"Very likely," said Kong-ti; and then, while a look of relief passed upon his features, he added: "I am glad this is so, for now her blood rests not on my hands. She took her own life. By the Imperial Joss, the thing shall be made public. Poor woman! She is gone, and I am left without a wife!"

Li smiled as he heard these words, but the prince was sober. Kong-ti did not speak as with the meaning of a joke, but with the thought of the hypocrite. He was rehearsing the part he was to play before the world.

"You may go," he said to Li, "and tell the sad news to my people. Give orders to the mandarins that all amusements in the city be stopped, and have the temples opened to the mourners. It is a sad blow, Li—a sad blow. She was a good woman—too good to live. Go, and leave me alone in my sorrow. Tell the servants that no one shall see me to-day, for I will not be disturbed in my grief."

The attendant withdrew, and as soon as the prince was left alone he started up from his seat and clapped his hands upon his head.

"Not all lost yet!" he exclaimed, while an exulting look broke over his features. "By the Child of the Sun, this thing works well. Now to Yu-lu—and then for the finishing of the bold youth who would have snatched her from me."

Yu-lu sat within a sumptuously furnished apartment, and near her stood her former keeper, Lan. The maiden was pale and wan, and the livid hue about her eyes told how long and freely she had wept. Her fair features were all wrought in agony, and her brow was pencilled with the pain that worked in the brain. She sat there with her head resting upon her hands when she was startled by the entrance of the prince. She shuddered when she saw him, and a groan of despair broke from her lips. Kong-ti motioned for Lan to leave the room, and then he sat down by the maiden's side.

"Bright sunlight of my life," he said, in a low, melancholy tone, "the blow has come, and where shall I look for joy or hope, but in you? Niao is dead!"

Yu-lu covered her face with her hands and shuddered.

"Read this," continued the prince, handing her the silken missive which Li had brought.

The maiden took it, and with trembling hands she held it. She read it, and still she shuddered. She thought it possible that the ill-fated princess had taken her own life, but she felt sure, also, that the husband's cruelty had driven her to the act.

"Dear Yu-lu," resumed the prince, after he had received back the letter, "this blow has not come upon me so hard as it would had I not been prepared for this. Niao had long been subject to these fits, and I expected she would have died long ago, but some mysterious power has held her up. I think it was the direct will of Heaven that she should live until you were prepared to take her place. You will soon be called upon now to assume the station for which I have had you fitted."

"Let me follow Niao!" groaned the maiden, "and I will bless you."

"So you shall, sweet Yu-lu. You shall commence to follow where she commenced a score of years ago."

"No, no. Be kind, and let me die now!"

"Not until you are my wife."

"That I can never be."

"That you shall be!"

"O, be merciful!"

"I mean to be."

"Let me not suffer such a curse."

"*Beware that you do not suffer a greater!*"

Yu-lu started, for these last words were spoken strangely and fearfully.

"You should know me by this time," the prince added, with a meaning shake of the head. "You are mine—all mine—and I will make you my wife if you will. If you like not that, then be what other women are, who live as mothers, but not as wives!"

The maiden shrank back and burst into tears. They were hot, scalding tears, for they came from a heart that was bursting with indignation; but she dared not show all her feelings. She had been so long subject to the power of the prince that the bond seemed almost by nature her portion, and she feared to awaken the wrath of one who seemed to be in truth her master. But aside from all this the terrible threat last made had sank to her soul more deeply than all else. She shrank from such a fate as shrinks a child from the blood-stained hand of the midnight murderer. She was bound hand and foot, and even her speech she dared not use. She would have asked concerning Paul Ardeen, but she dared not do it. Once she had mentioned his name, and the fearful storm of passion which it called up had frightened her from repeating it.

"Yu-lu," spoke the prince, after a few moments of reflection, "I hope we may have no more conversation of this kind. I forgive you for attempting to escape from me, and freely take you back to my love. Beware that you do not lose it. Now when my season of mourning is passed, I shall give to you the station you are so well qualified to fill, and for which I have expended so much to have you fitted. I am sorry that poor Niao is dead, but it was not in my power to prevent it. It was the will of the great Tien-tan, and his will must be done. I bow to the decree, and I hope I am resigned."

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

A WHOLE NATION OF FRANKLINS.

We have a few great engineers, and mechanics, and a large body of clever workmen; but the Americans seem likely to become a whole nation of such people. Already their rivers swarm with steamboats; their valleys are becoming crowded with factories; their towns surpassing those of every State of Europe, except Belgium, Holland and England, are the abodes of all the skill which now distinguishes a town population; and there is scarcely an art in Europe not carried on in America with equal or greater skill than in Europe, though it has been here cultivated and improved through ages. A whole nation of Franklins, Stevensons, and Watts in prospect, is something wonderful for other nations to contemplate. In contrast with the comparative ignorance of a bulk of the people of Europe, the great intelligence of the whole people of America is worthy of public attention.—*London Sun.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LILLIE FANE.

BY GEORGE ALFORD.

Sweet Lillie Fane,
Thy like again,
Shall mortal never see;
With face so full of angel light,
With hair so full of sunshine bright,
With eyes so full of glee.

A singing joy,
Which did employ
Our thoughts in fondest prayer;
That never aught of earthly pain
Should a moment mastery obtain
O'er such a spirit fair.

With what a pride
The new made bride
Would ever look on thee;
Foreseeing in a future hour
That Heaven would send her such a flower
Of angel purity.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

PRIDE AND LOVE:

—OR,—

THE FREAKS OF FORTUNE.

BY GILBERT LE FEVRE.

It was about the middle of a fine summer's afternoon in the year 1820, that our scene opens on the banks of the Hudson river. Then but little more than an uncleared and unclaimed wilderness, the land between the Highlands and the upper extreme of Dutchess county was almost uninhabited, save by a few clusters of cottages here and there near the river's margin. The immediate neighborhood of Newburg was the precise locality which we desire to indicate, and which at the present day exhibits a high state of cultivation, and the locality of a thickly settled and prosperous district.

At the moment to which we refer, a single horseman, who had been skirting the river's banks, apparently for miles, in a ride of pleasure, had drawn up his horse, and now, half turning in the saddle, was gazing intently at some object which he descried within the shade of an upland grove some hundred or two rods in shore.

"By this light, but it looks more like a picture than actual life," burst from the lips of the youthful rider, as he gazed, and turning his horse's head up the gently rising slope, he rode at an easy gait to the spot where he had been gazing, but soon alighting, he tossed the reins of his bridle over the charred remains of a decayed tree, and walked forward.

Beneath the grateful shade of a cluster of noble trees, there was reclining upon the soft green sward a child, perhaps almost too far advanced to merit that appellation, and yet she could have been scarcely more than thirteen years of age. In appearance, she struck you at once as being rather matured for her years, and in form and feature delicate and lovely in the extreme. Her light auburn hair was entirely unconfined, and hung with bewitching grace and luxuriance about her well developed neck and shoulders. Her countenance was frank and open in expression, with a trusting look beaming from her eyes. These were blue—so blue as to make you sure of their color at once, and shaded by lashes fawn-like in length and beauty. The unmistakeable glow of health was on her face, and her rich, clear complexion bespoke the purity of her blood.

No wonder the youthful horseman had been irresistibly drawn toward the girl as she thus sat all unconsciously poring over the pages of a book. No wonder that he paused now, and almost held his breath lest he should break the spell that seemed to hang about the lovely scene before him. But see, the breaking of a dry twig beneath his foot has startled her, and she half rises as he draws nearer, and is now starting and looking with mingled surprise and interest to see a stranger so near her. The retirement of the grove was not often thus broken in upon, and though the child was not startled exactly, or rather not affrighted, yet she was somewhat surprised.

"You have chosen a very sweet and pleasant spot for your reading," said the stranger, in a low, musical voice, that inspired the child with instant confidence.

"I often come here, it is so near the cottage, and in sight of the river, and always so shady and cool."

"Your home is hard by, then?"

"You can see the cottage through this avenue."

"I do see it, and a lovely location it is."

Seating himself near the spot where the child had been first discovered, the new comer begged that he might not interrupt her, and both were soon seated there together, as though they were old friends. The youth was some eighteen years of age, manly, handsome, and of a bearing and speech that at once produced confidence and trust, while it showed him to be of good birth and refined associations. An hour passed by before either was aware of the progress of time, and that both had been interested and pleased by this chance meeting, was most evident. They had even exchanged names, so to speak. The youth introducing himself as Edward Norcross, who lived some dozen miles towards Poughkeepsie, and the child as Maud Doncaster, whose guardian lived hard by in the cottage they saw.

On his return home, Edward Norcross thought the whole way of the fairy-like beauty of his new acquaintance; her intelligence, grace and beauty had charmed him. He did not tell of his adventure when he reached home, but he dreamed of it, and determined soon again to see one who had so delighted and won upon him at a first meeting. Maud Doncaster, too, was more than pleased—she was interested in the handsome young stranger who was so pleasant and agreeable every way, who seemed to know so much of the world, and who had read so many books that she had read, and who admired just the characters that she admired; indeed—childlike innocent—she wished she might meet the young horseman every day in the "star grove," as it was called.

Edward Norcross was the only son of a wealthy gentleman, whose residence was also on the banks of the Hudson, but some dozen miles or so further north than the present site of Newburg. With the exception of a sister he was an only child, and in the light of his father's views he was an only child, as to him he looked for the sustaining of his name, his fortune and his homestead. The mother had long since passed away, and Edward's father, having lost his natural companion, had espoused a love of books and study to which he was passionately devoted, and had been able to personally superintend his education to the period of his entering college, for he had just graduated at Harvard, and had come home to settle in life, or at least to make up his mind as to what profession or course of occupation he would choose. His father was a stern, proud man—proud of his position and wealth, proud of his acquirements and proud of his children, for Edward's sister was a very sweet, intelligent and lovely girl.

Edward Norcross soon found excuse to visit the spot where he had met the gentle and lovely Maud Doncaster, not once, nor twice, but many times, and ere the long summer days had passed away he was almost a daily visitor at her cottage home, and they strolled and read and rode much together. All this was apparently unobserved, and they were left quite alone to consult their own wishes and tastes; we say this was apparently the case, and yet, had an observer watched the aspect of affairs, he would have noticed that there was one pair of eyes that were rarely off the youthful friends when they were thus together, their owner being no less a personage than Granville Osgood, the guardian of Maud.

Mr. Granville Osgood was a man of peculiar appearance; possessed of a commanding form, a fine figure, but a countenance, whatever it might once have been, now quite disfigured and homely by the ravages of the smallpox. There was something quite indescribable about him—something that puzzled you the more that you strove to unravel it. That he was a man of intelligence and large cultivation was very evident, but his honest country neighbors, while they bore testimony to his honesty and strict uprightness, and even liberality, yet whispered to each other that Mr. Osgood had met with some disappointment in life, but of what nature they were not able to divine. It was understood, however, that he was the guardian of Maud Doncaster, whose father, a rich widower, now in the East Indies, had entrusted her to his care, as a friend whom he did not fear to trust. That Maud regarded him with the most profound respect and affection, was as evident and apparent as the fact that none but the most judicious line of conduct on his part could so have affected her. But what would have struck the observer in the intercourse between them, would have been, that when he addressed her, his whole nature seemed to change from the cold business man, or the absorbed student, to that of the utmost tenderness. This regard, be its nature what it might, did not vent itself in fawning or undue assiduity, but in that tone of voice and that earnest watchfulness of the eye which tell of depth and sincerity of sentiment. We said there was one pair of eyes that never ceased to watch over Maud, when she was with her young and newfound friend—they were the eyes of her guardian.

His watchfulness was characterized by an earnestness that might have been construed into jealousy in a younger person, but Granville Osgood was a man of forty-nine or thereabouts, while Maud was just about fourteen; she ran to his side and looked up into his face so confidingly, braided her hands together and hung so childlike upon his shoulder, that she could not have evinced more real affectionate trust in the very father whom he represented. Even Edward Norcross was once or twice struck by the never varying interest which her guardian evinced, but after all set it down to a spirit of proper and careful anxiety in a faithful servant—for in such a capacity Mr. Osgood really seemed to stand to his friend, Maud's father in India.

In the meantime Edward Norcross becomes almost a daily visitor at the cottage, and winter comes and goes, and a second summer smiles upon the young and handsome companions who wander together in the green woods and on the shady banks of the Hudson. Maud is already fifteen, and by vigorous and healthful exercise is in form developed into ripening womanhood. The happy acquaintance which was formed so casually more than a twelve month since, has proved but a happy and sunny chain of pleasant memories. Maud regarded Edward Norcross as a very dear friend, and although nothing had ever been positively said between them of marriage, yet it was plain even to themselves, that they saw each new beauty only through each other's eyes. All this, though entirely uninterfered with, was carefully observed by Granville Osgood. Somehow, Edward Norcross had become much impressed too with his character, and respected his opinion upon any subject, which he at once saw was that of a mind richly stored and highly disciplined.

It was just about Maud's sixteenth birthday, that a new acquaintance joined the neighborhood and their society. It was the person of an elder son of a neighboring farmer, who had enjoyed a liberal education, and who had been studying law for a considerable period in New York. Either sick of city life, or out of funds (the last most likely), he had come home the first time for four or five years. His name was Morris Farrar, and whatever he might originally have been, a knowledge of the world and contact with its allurements had rendered him a little *blase*. In other words, Morris Farrar had drank deep of the cup of town dissipation. He was naturally intelligent, had graduated with honor from college, was witty and at times was brilliant, added to which there was a dashing sort of ease and grace about him that was very agreeable.

Living very near to the cottage of Granville Osgood, young Farrar soon became in a degree intimate with its inhabitants, and when Edward Norcross was absent was pretty sure to be by Maud's side, pouring some gallant speech into her ear, or relating some anecdote of town life, or rattling away in witty and laughable conversation really amusing in itself. Maud very innocently listened to him, was agreeably entertained, and though she was sometimes almost displeased by the familiarity which he assumed in his conversatión, and which she never encouraged, yet she was far from disliking his society. She did not see through the designs of the practised *roue*, but another did, and Morris Farrar little dreamed what argus eyes those were of Granville Osgood's when watching over his young and lovely charge.

Edward Norcross was only sad of heart, but could not bring himself to speak even to Maud of the cause of his sadness. How could she help being pleased at young Farrar's gay and gallant compliments, he was so witty, so full of life, with such a fund of stories? True, she could not feel towards him as she did towards Edward Norcross, but yet she was by no means free from the fascination of his powers to please and to win. Had Morris Farrar been less impetuous, more patient and wary, perhaps he might have gained Maud's *heart*—as it was he only gained her ear. One twilight in midsummer young Farrar had been sitting by her side, talking merrily, when gradually his voice changed; he assumed a tender tone, and plead a love for her by whom he sat. Maud started, trembled, and declared she had never thought of such a result; that she was happy to call him friend, but there their intimacy must end.

Morris Farrar was, however, too well practised in the wiles of the heart not to know that he already possessed a certain kind of influence over the young and beautiful girl, and he determined not to surrender his object so easily. He poured a poisoned tale into her ear, and strove to persuade her of a love that he did not feel, and even insulted her by a proposal, that while it brought the blush to her cheek and the tear to her eye, yet brought out all the purity and beauty of her character in a phase that completely silenced and abashed the audacious miscreant. She turned from him and hastened toward the cottage, while he muttered, half aloud:

"The game has flown—I was too shy; a little more boldness would have won the day."

"And have cost you your life!" said a stern, deep voice behind him.

Morris Farrar started, and turning round, beheld the commanding person of Granville Osgood, who stood looking upon him with mingled scorn and vengeance.

"I was not aware that eaves-dropping was one of Mr. Osgood's accomplishments," he said at last, though he avoided meeting his eye.

"Think not, sir, that I trust so valuable a prize as yonder innocent in such company as yours without due protection. It is well for you that your insulting language and contemptible proposal went no farther. Had you laid a finger on the child I would have sent a bullet through your brain on the instant."

"It is easy to threaten," said young Farrar, haughtily and yet with embarrassment.

"Hold, young man," replied the other, "look you," and as he spoke he rolled a leathern glove into a small ball within his hand, so compressing it as to cause it to assume a form and size very like a pigeon's egg, which he threw high in the air, and just at the instant of time when it turned to fall he fired a pistol, taken from his bosom, and picking up the glove tossed it to the astonished Farrar, saying, "you can judge whether my aim is a steady one, and I repeat that it is only chance that has sent that ball through yonder glove in place of your brain."

The blanched cheek of the gay *roue* attested to the fact that he believed the speaker.

"Now go, sir, and if you appear upon these grounds again, or dare to address the innocent being you have so insulted, either here or elsewhere, you know your fate."

The disconcerted youth made no answer, but hastened silently away with downcast eyes.

Still time rolled on. Perhaps Maud needed this little episode, this jar of heart feeling, to enable her rightly to prize and truly to understand the nature of the love borne for her by Edward Norcross. He, only too happy to be again ever by her side, and apparently possessing her entire confidence and affections, never referred to the unpleasant little episode in the current of events that characterized their intimacy.

Once more they were entirely happy in the joy of each other's company. At heart, Maud felt that she had half merited the insult she had received, in punishment for one moment prefering the gay, heartless society of young Farrar to that of the tender, truthful friend and lover whom she found in Edward Norcross. In the meantime, they were not the less overlooked and carefully watched by the vigilant guardian of Maud, whose motive, let it arise from what it might, was a most potent and ever present one.

It was on Maud's seventeenth birthday that Edward Norcross and herself were seated together on the very spot where they had first met each other. The occasion and the recollections of the fact we have referred to, seemed to be impressing the minds of both, when, their eyes meeting, each read the other's thoughts. Her lover had never seriously proposed to Maud, though the tenderness that existed between them at this time required no formal language to bind their feelings or intimate its force. But the associations of the moment seemed to render Edward Norcross eloquent, and to force him to speak to her more freely and confidingly than he had ever yet done.

"Maud, do you remember that it was here that we first met, some four years ago?" As he asked this question, he took her willing hand within his own.

"I do," she answered, lowly.

"And have you in that time, dear Maud, ever regretted that we have met?"

"O, no! Edward, indeed no."

"Maud."

"Well, Edward," said the blushing girl, for she knew what was coming, as if intuitively.

"I have never told you in all that period of time that *I love you*, and yet I do not think that you can be ignorant of the fact. I have almost feared to speak thus, lest in doing so I should break some delightful spell which seems to me to hang about you and to entrance my own heart. But tell me, dearest, do you, too, love me?"

One earnest, heart-fraught glance from her full eyes into his own, spoke more—far more than words could do, and the next moment, with a tender kiss (the first kiss!) upon her brow, he pressed her fair form to his heart.

That evening, sitting in the little cottage of Granville Osgood, Edward Norcross broke his hopes, wishes and love to the guardian of Maud. Long and sage was the talk holden by the guardian. The subject of her distant father's consent was discussed, and taking Maud's hand within his own, and parting the fair hair from her brow, the sober and thoughtful man seemed to regard her with deep feeling and evident emotion.

"You know, Maud, that I am accountable to your father for everything I do in your behalf, and that I must be scrupulously careful both for your sake and his."

"I know it, sir."

"You know it would pain you to do aught he would disapprove."

"Not more, sir, than it would pain me to do that which should displease you, for you have been to me a father, ay, a kind, dear, devoted father, and if I did not love you like one, I should be unnatural indeed."

"Well, well, child," he answered, brushing away a tear, "we will see, we will see about this."

Then turning to her lover, he said:

"To-morrow, come here at this hour, and I will give you my answer, whether Maud shall become your wife or otherwise. In the meantime, farewell." As he spoke, he rose and walked into the little room that formed his library, and where he was alone, while Edward and Maud, after a brief stroll upon the green, bade good-by, and also separated.

Edward Norcross had never confided to his father the secret of his affection, and only his sister had been apprised of it. With her affectionate aid it had been easy to keep his heart's secret and to find excuses enough for his frequent absence from home. He had never paused to ask himself why it was that he desired to keep this secret from his father, but yet he had intuitively done so, because if he had thought for one moment upon the subject, he would have seen that his father would never have given his consent to a marriage of his son with an unknown family of humble means. His father was proud, aristocratic in his notions, and rich in this world's goods, and he looked to his son to make such an alliance as would enhance their family property and name in value. Edward realized all this, and therefore he knew not what to do at the present juncture of affairs, nor could the dear, kind-hearted sister advise him. Time, the solver of all riddles and all doubts, soon settled the question that rose in the young lover's mind. Having received a propitious answer to his demand from Maud's guardian, who, however, qualified his permission to their union with many sage remarks and good advice to both, Edward at last found courage to break his secret to his father. As he anticipated, his parent was angry indeed at his position, and positively forbade him from consummating a purpose that would result in making him a beggar. He wrote a haughty letter to Mr. Osgood, to which he received quite as haughty a reply, saying, that he should leave the matter entirely between Edward Norcross, who was of age, and his ward. To this note Edward's father replied, charging Mr. Osgood with mercenary motives in thus countenancing such an ill-assorted union, to which the latter replied, that he knew his own motives best, and was responsible to his own bosom alone for them.

"Our means are humble, Edward," said Maud's guardian to the young lover, "very humble, and your father promises to disinherit you if you marry Maud; you will incur a great responsibility in disobeying him, and in regard to the means of support for you both. Do you still—in the face of all this, in spite of the awkward contingencies that hang about this proposed alliance, desire to consummate it?"

"I do, sir, nor could aught on earth change my purpose so long as Maud loves me. I have a profession, I can labor, we will be economical, and need not want."

"But you lose all your right to your father's brilliant fortune."

"What is that, sir, compared to her affection; *that* is all to me—fortune, life, ambition. I beg that you will not draw such comparisons, Mr. Osgood."

A secret smile wreathed the face of her guardian, as Edward thus spoke, and approaching Maud, who was a passive listener, he took her hand within his own. To a keen observer, that expression of countenance said much; it told of a calm inward satisfaction that would have been half puzzling to one even who understood as the reader does, the present state of affairs. And still he gazed calmly and with satisfaction upon the young couple, as they conversed now cheerfully with each other, they being too much absorbed to notice his contemplation of them.

The objection of Edward's father to the marriage of course caused a considerable delay in its consummation, but at last the day was set, and Edward's sister, who had already secretly met Maud more than once, and who thought her, to use her own words, one of the sweetest creatures in existence, was to act as bridesmaid, of course unknown to her father. A day was chosen when it was known that he would be absent in New York, and the spot was to be the open green where Edward and Maud had first met each other. It was a simple ceremony, and the grave pastor of the neighboring village, with Mr. Osgood and Edward's sister were the only witnesses to the important event, which was to disfranchise Edward, and at once dash all the brilliant prospects of his future as it regarded his father's property and landed estates.

Maud was the picture of loveliness, gentle, blushing, loving, all that a bride should be, and kissing Clara, Edward's sister, she led her up to

Mr. Osgood, and told her how dear and kind he had ever been to her, so that Clara felt as though she could kiss him though his countenance was anything but handsome, being, as we have said, disfigured by the ravages of the small pox. But somehow, Clara felt that he was so intelligent, so noble in spirit, that she forgot all about the disfiguration, and indeed conversed so disingenuously and sincerely with him, that he, throwing aside the usual reserve that clothed his manner and his words, delighted her and them all by the brilliancy of his conversation and the spirit of his wit. It was a small but happy bridal party.

The anger of Edward's father knew no bounds—he could not believe that his son would sacrifice such immense pecuniary advantage to the love of a simple country girl. He very deliberately drew him a check for a thousand dollars, sent for him, presented it to him, and desired him at once to retire from the parental roof which had sheltered him from infancy. This was keen punishment to Edward, but he obeyed, and Maud and himself, after a pleasant trip to Saratoga, joined Mr. Osgood once more at his cottage, and then Edward, husbanding his humble means, at once set about the application of his profession. What most surprised him was the calmness with which Mr. Osgood took his father's resentment, since he knew that he felt so deeply interested in Maud's comfort and happiness, but he established his law office in the neighboring village, and at once assumed a share of practice at the county court, which, with the money left from the check his father presented him, was quite sufficient to render them comfortable for a period at least.

One evening, as Edward, his young wife and Mr. Osgood sat quietly outside the cottage door, enjoying the soft freshness of the evening air and pleasantly chatting to each other, Maud's late guardian seemed exercised by some subject of which he desired to speak, and at last said:

"Maud, you have got rid of your old guardian now, and are only responsible to this gay young sprig of the law; glad enough to be relieved from the reign of my rule?"

"No indeed, sir," said Maud, extending her hand to him, "my obligations to you, Mr. Osgood, are too many and too tangible ever to be forgotten. Why, pray, do you speak thus?"

"Because I was thinking if you so easily forget your father in this new relation, there is little chance for your old guardian to be remembered."

"Forget my father!"

"Yes, Maud, forget him—you have not mentioned his name since you were married!"

"True," she said thoughtfully, and musing to herself. "But what, dear, kind guardian, is he to me that you are not? You have reared me from a time I know not of, you have been all a father could have been to me, and I fear if he were to come home now, I could not love him with the filial regard that constantly actuates my heart for you."

"Maud!" said the guardian, with a trembling lip.

"Well, sir," answered the lovely wife, rising and approaching him as she marked his emotion.

"You are *my child! I am your father!*"

But a moment elapsed in which conviction poured into her heart, and she threw her arms around his neck and wept like a child. Edward, all amazed, could only gaze at the singular scene in silence. He understood what was said but could hardly realize its purport, though he felt that there could be no mistake here, and that father and daughter were indeed mingling sacred tears together. Instantly a thought flashed across his mind, explaining certain matters which had often struck him as heretofore peculiar, to say the least of them, as connected with her guardian's incessant anxiety and watchfulness over Maud.

"This is a singular denouement," at last Edward found voice to say.

"Doubtless to you both it is strange enough, and will require explanation."

"Dear, dear *father*," continued Maud, still hanging about his neck, "how intuitively I have seemed to be drawn towards you, not knowing that one drop of your blood was in my veins."

"The night is passed and it is now morning," said her father. "The ordeal which I had resolved upon, both for you, my child, and him who should be considered worthy, by me, to be your husband, is over. I have no longer any secrets from you, you have both come forth from the refiner's fire only the brighter and better for the test."

Amazed at this new discovery the young couple were prepared for any development, and only listened when he bade them draw nearer to him and attend to a history new to them both.

"In me no longer see an humble, disappointed scholar named Granville Osgood, but this child's father, Lord Robert Doncaster, of Doncaster Castle, England!"

"You amaze me, sir," said Edward; "what could possibly have induced this disguise?"

"Listen to my story, Edward Norcross, and you will see that the struggle in my bosom between *love* and *pride* has led to the present state of things, and happy is the result after all. When I married your mother, Maud, she was about your age, and very, very like you; her family was rich, like my own titled and honorable, and until you were three years old, no happier home or domestic fireside existed in all England. Suddenly a cloud came over our household in the visitation of a fearful sickness upon myself, the effects of which I bear so plainly still. I was seized with the small pox, and though fearfully ill had yet sufficient strength of purpose and resolve to order my removal to a safe distance from home in the care of able nurses, lest I might impart the disease to those more precious to me than life itself, my wife and child. At length I recovered, but from being one who might pride himself on his personal appearance, I had become repulsive in looks, a fact which so affected my spirits as to sour my disposition and embitter my very life. I became exceedingly sensitive, thought that my wife dreaded me now, and indeed I fear that the great alteration in me did change a regard which, perhaps, was never very strong, into, at least, a cold and formal affection. This harrowed my feelings most sorely. I believed that no one liked me or could like me, and the thought was most horrible to me that my infant, just growing into childhood, would partake of this feeling. I loved my little Maud passionately, and could not bear this thought. No, I thought, she would at least love me, but it would be because I was her *father*, and even here I was to be disappointed, and not loved for myself, for was I not *hideous?*

"At length a sudden illness carried my wife to her grave. I became more sensitive than ever. Philosophy would not come to my aid. I could not bring myself to assume my old position in society. The constant thought harrowed me that my child would love me perhaps as a *duty*, because I was her father; but O, I would repeat almost in my sleep, would that I might be loved for myself and the warm heart that still beats beneath the scarred surface! Brooding upon these matters, I became little better than a monomaniac in relation to them, until at last I made up my mind to pursue a course which my desires pointed out to me.

"I resolved to come over to America, where I was unknown and sure to remain so. I arranged my business affairs, left faithful agents behind me, came hither and assumed the name I have so long borne, and the relation of guardian to Maud. Having no longer the claim of a parent upon her, I knew if she loved me it must be for myself alone, and to see her affectionate regard, as daily evinced in the progress from childhood to womanhood, has been a solace and happiness to me that has long since cured me of my foolish pride and fear. But having once assumed this position, and observing your growing intimacy together, I watched over it with constant care, leaving you both free to act your own will and pleasure. I knew exactly how the matter would be regarded by your father, Edward Norcross, but I wanted a husband who should love Maud for *herself* as I have wanted to be loved by her, not to have her marry a fashionable fortune hunter.

"You have sacrificed a fortune to wed her, that is to say, you have apparently done so, but you have gained one with her, sir, that would purchase your father's twenty times over, for the Doncaster estates are valued at millions! and you, children, are at this moment the only living heirs! It now only remains for us to quietly return thither and occupy the station which rightfully belongs to us, and this we will do as soon as may be."

It is almost superfluous to add a sequel to our ower true tale, or to give in minutiæ the ready reconcilement between Edward and his father, or to depict a closing scene in which we should represent them happily situated in Doncaster, with a princely home and possessed of just as happy hearts and tender affections as characterized their lot when they occupied an humble cottage home on the banks of the river Hudson.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

The Prima Donna of San Carlo.

BY B. C. HANSCOMB.

"Ah! my lord, you should have been at San Carlo," said Arthur Trelawney, a young Englishman, as he drew a chair beside his friend, Lord Wildair, who sat near the balcony of his apartment, gazing listlessly through the trailing vine-leaves out upon the lovely bay of Naples, now sparkling close at hand beneath the silvery rays of the high-risen moon, mellowing in the dim distance into a dusky yet golden colored haze, that wedded sky and water on the fair horizon. "You should have been at San Carlo, to-night;" he repeated, emphatically.

"And why to-night, of all others?" asked Wildair, as he removed his Turkish pipe, and permitted the smoke to curl out slowly through his thick moustache, once raven black and glossy, now grizzled and "unkempt."

"Why, my dear lord, it was an event—a night to be marked with a white stone in one's calendar."

"Eh!" said Wildair, in a tone of irony. "A new opera, or a new ballet-dancer?"

"Neither, but a new singer—an angel."

"All women are angels by lamplight. Pshaw!" replied Wildair. "Do you remember that dirty slip-shod wench we saw buying roses of the pretty flower girl on the piazza this morning? Very well, that was La Favorita—the queen of the ballet, whom all you young fellows are half mad about."

"I could not be mistaken about the beauty of Signorina Helena," replied Trelawney, "for I sat in the stagebox and scanned her features through an opera-glass that might serve for a telescope. She is very beautiful. But the mere physical beauty is nothing—her smile has a candor and innocence that would disarm the most inveterate prejudice."

"A heritage of these Italian girls," replied the nobleman.

"'Still let Ausonia, skilled in every art
To soften manners, yet corrupt the heart,' etc.

Believe an old campaigner—they are all false—false as the color on their cheeks. Yet with their soft Ausonian smiles, they conjure the gold out of British pockets, as schoolboys hook gudgeons from a mill stream. Faugh! I am sick of them and their arts."

"But hear me out," said Trelawney, impetuously. "Let her smiles and beauty pass—I would speak of her voice; it is transcendent; of her expression, it is that of an improvisatrice."

"My dear boy," said Wildair, "I doubt your judgment and reject your testimony. You saw a very pretty girl before you—and you took it for granted she sang like an angel because she looked like one. I should not so readily have been carried away—remember, I have heard Malibran and Sontag."

"Ah, my lord, you must go and hear her."

"To what end?" asked Wildair. "Sang she like a syren she would not charm my ear.

'Man delights not me nor woman either.'"

"Ah, you are made of marble, my lord, and not of flesh and blood."

"I enjoy such a reputation among those Italians, I suppose," replied Wildair, carelessly, "because I do not gesticulate like a pulchinello."

"They do say you are very cold," replied Trelawney. "And the women are rather afraid of you."

"What would they say if they knew I was craving fiercely for excitement?" said Wildair. "What if they knew I seriously thought of buying a felucca, manning it with desperate fellows, and hoisting the black flag in the Greek Archipelago?"

"It is very evident that you were never under the influence of the softer emotions—that you never loved, my lord," said Trelawney.

"I don't look like a lover—do I?" asked Wildair, with a bitter laugh. "With my hair prematurely gray, with these stern lines chiselled in my face, it does seem that I could ever

——'sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair.'"

"No, indeed," replied Trelawney, with a frank laugh, "and I suspect, my lord, your looks belie you not. Yet, pardon me, if I must confess that there is a mystery about you, that only yourself can solve. I do not profess the key to it, because, educated in France, and since for years a traveller in the East, I am but little conversant with the personal history of many of my eminent countrymen. This only I know, that you entered political life and blazed for a while in parliament, then suddenly resigned your seat; that you were very successful as an author, then suddenly ceased to write; that you were very popular at home, and suddenly expatriated yourself. I found you at Naples—circumstances with which you are well acquainted showed me that beneath a proud, cold exterior, you concealed some sympathies with your fellow-men; that, instead of being the misanthrope you profess yourself, you delighted in deeds of charity."

"Cease, cease!" cried Wildair. "Do not impute to me virtues that I do not possess. I am disgusted with the world and its inmates. If I give the rascals gold, it is only because I know that it will help them quicker to perdition. And for my dwelling-place, all countries are alike to me—only England is more hateful than any other. To escape it I trusted myself to the ocean:

'Nor recked what land it bore me to,
So not again to mine.'"

"Strange!" exclaimed Trelawney.

"Ay, passing strange, is it not?" said Lord Wildair. "Are you sleepy?"

"Not at all. These golden summer nights are not for sleep, methinks."

"Then gaze out on that beautiful nature that you love, and I endure, while I make you my confessor, and tell you what you know not, yet seem desirous of learning, a portion of my history. Gray, worn and haggard as you see me, Arthur, I am yet but little turned of forty. Like you, I inherited a large fortune, was well educated, had refined and cultivated tastes, and like you, looked forward to a high career of glory and of pleasure. In youth we are all castle-builders, needing no firmer basis for our airy structures than a passing cloud gilded by a sunsmile.

"When I went forth into the world—that fairy place of wonders to the neophyte, I was a gentle, timid, retiring boy; ambitious as Lucifer, son of the morning, Arthur, but cramped and held back by my accursed sensitiveness. I met—I need not tell you where—an angel of beauty, on whose forehead shone the signet of intellect, bright as the star of dawn. Her eyes were capable of melting tenderness, but they oftener flashed with the electric light of wit and mind. She was poor—an orphan. I conceived the romantic notion of wooing her incognito—for I wished to be sure that this peerless creature loved me for myself, and not for my title and my rent-roll. The ruse was successful. I took her on a bridal tour, in a humble vehicle, but the first night we lodged beneath the vaulted roof of Wildair Hall, and she knew that she had wedded a noble of the land.

"To do her justice, the sudden change of fortune did not turn her brain—it was too cool and well balanced for that. She bore her honors like one born to them. She seemed in the first part of our union, to be wholly absorbed in a true woman's love. Amid all the splendors that surrounded her, she saw only myself. I must even confess that I was the first to weary of this tranquil Arcadian existence. Restless desires took possession of me. Field sports did not satisfy the craving—books did not supply the vacuum. I was called upon to take my hereditary seat in the Lords. The spark of ambition was awakened.

"Amanda hung upon me admiringly as I recounted the parliamentary triumphs of my ancestors, all of whom were distinguished for their eloquence no less than for gallantry in the field. I told her what I would do and say when I was among my peers. She caught inspiration from my tone, and a desire to see me shine that she might reflect my splendor sprang up in her bosom. With her for an admiring auditor, I practised extempore speaking, and was gratified to meet with the applause, evidently sincere, that flowed spontaneously from her lips. With her warm kiss lingering on my lips, the pressure of her delicate fingers imprinted on my neck, I went up to London. I took my seat among the peers.

"Almost directly on my admission, there came up a question which I had studied, and on which I felt bound in honor to speak. I rose to do so. I have told you that I was by nature, timid and distrustful, nor had my training been such as in any degree to overcome my native diffidence. When I saw all eyes fixed upon my countenance—when I stood in the full glare of those countless lights—a feeling of horror and fright came over me which no language can depict. Fancy the feelings of a somnambulist, who, on suddenly awaking, finds himself in the middle of the night, standing on the main truck of a vessel surging in a storm, a height to which in wakefulness his nerves would never have permitted him to climb, and you will have some faint idea of the agony I experienced. My throat was parched—my brain reeled—my tongue refused its office. Yet I strove to speak—I stammered—I gasped—my articulation was indistinct—I stumbled through a few sentences and then sat down amidst a general smile of contemptuous pity. I know not how I crawled out of the house. The fresh air, however, revived me.

"I was to have been the messenger of my triumph to Wildair Hall. I was now to be the bearer of my shameful failure. No matter—there alone I was sure of a warm welcome—words of love and consolation. My groom brought my horse—I flung myself in the saddle and galloped forth to London. I rode with a red spur thirty miles without drawing rein. I threw myself from my saddle at the hall door and flew to Lady Wildair's boudoir. In broken words I told the story of my shame. As I ended I saw the same smile of contempt which I had borne in my memory from London, depicted on her countenance. But this was not all. Her disappointment found vent in angry words. She railed me for my failure in scathing language, and ended by calling me a coward and poltroon! It was too much for me to bear. Springing forward, I raised my riding-whip. Curse me not, Trelawney—it did not descend upon those alabaster shoulders which madness alone directed the blow. No, stung to madness as I was, I yet retained a particle of self-control. The whip dropped from my nerveless hand. But the intention was enough. Those white shoulders shrunk as if they already felt the lash. Her very lips grew pale, but ineffable scorn flashed from her night-like eyes. Drawing herself up to her full, queenly height, and bending on me a look that might have killed, but did not, she swept by me, and I was alone. An hour passed. I sought my couch. Lady Wildair shared it not that night, nor ever again.

"In the morning, I sought her, but she was gone. Her boudoir wore its usual aspect. All my wedding gifts lay there untouched. I sought her dressing-room. There hung the sumptuous apparel in which she looked a queen, but I missed the simple, rustic dress in which she first met my eye, and with which she started on her bridal tour, little dreaming of the splendors that awaited her. I have never seen her since. I caused her to be sought everywhere. I inserted guarded advertisements in the newspapers, inviting her return. They elicited no reply. Whether she is yet living, or has sought oblivion in death, remains to this hour an awful mystery. It was given out that she had committed suicide. A base-minded though nobly-born villain dared to connect his honor and her name—and I shot him like a dog. The lesson required no repetition.

"I returned to London and to parliament. My return was signalized by an attempt to pass the bill still under discussion, which I had risen on that fatal night to oppose—and a member sneeringly alluded to me as the eloquent opponent of the measure. I sprang to my feet and replied to his speech in one of an hour long—a withering fulmination, in the centre of which I found the inspiration I had vainly sought before. My success was unbounded.

"Before my arrival, the ministry had every reason to anticipate the passage of their favorite measure. I rallied the opposition, and won over the wavering. The ministry were defeated—they resigned, and I was offered a seat in the new cabinet. But I had no heart for public life.

"I returned to the solitude of my ancestral hall. In utter friendlessness I poured out my full heart in poetry, which, in a spirit of reckless indifference I gave to the world. The public caught it up eagerly, and I became famous. But the popular plaudits fell upon a cold ear. I went abroad. In Paris, for two or three seasons I plunged into a career of frantic dissipation. They yet talk at Frescati's of the moody Englishman, who staked thousands on the turn of a die, and yet came off victorious ever, cold and impassible amid the wondering congratulations of the astonished *habitues*.

"I have gone from city to city like the accursed Hebrew of the legend—have courted death, and found it not, and find myself here, a lonely man, bereft at least of a secret hope scarce avowed to myself, that has yet clung to me through all my wanderings, that I might yet find the lost one. But now a spirit-voice seems whispering—nevermore! and I feel indeed that nevermore upon this shore of time will two hearts, so rudely rent asunder by the wave of passion, meet again.

"My tale is ended, Arthur; is it not a blithe one to tell of a moonlight night, beside the bay of Naples, in this soft clime of love and music? Good-night. Go to your bed now, and dream if you can of the young prima donna of San Carlo."

Trelawney was so much affected by the narrative, that he could find no words to express his sympathy; he could only offer his hand, and warmly grasp that of Lord Wildair, as he falteringly bade him adieu for the night.

Time wore on—again and again Trelawney listened to the song of the syren, and it soon became evident that he was completely enthralled by the potency of her spell. He sought an introduction to her; he found her accomplished and amiable, and now, free and independent, he announced to Lord Wildair, his intention of offering her his heart and fortune.

"I must see her, then," said Wildair, with a sigh. "I must abandon my hermit vows in which I have found a sort of vegetative calm, if not content, for one night at least, and judge this *rara avis* for myself. A bitter experience has given me a fatal skill in physiognomy. Promise me that you will not make this girl a proposal, till I have seen her."

"That I will do readily, my lord," replied Trelawney. "It imposes no restraint upon me, since I shall not call on her again till to-morrow, and you can see her at the opera, to-night."

"Well, to-night, then, if it must be so," said Wildair.

"You will be singularly favored by an unusual display of her accomplishments, for she is to introduce an English song," answered Trelawney.

"I am sorry for it," answered Wildair, drily. "I hate to hear my mother tongue murdered by these mouthing foreigners."

"She is said to speak it like a native."

"So was the courier reported to speak—the fellow I hired before I learned Italian—but I couldn't understand a word he said, except our national oath—and even that he mispronounced."

Night came, however, and Wildair, accompanied by Trelawney, found himself in the latter's box at San Carlo. The opera was "Otello." Wildair was indifferent to the opening scenes, but the moment the young prima donna appeared, his eyes were riveted upon her, as if he, too, were suddenly enthralled by the magic spell that had enchanted all Naples. Emotions to which he had for a long time been callous, reasserted their empire over his heart. Perhaps there was something in the portraiture of that

"jealousy, that dotes, but dooms,
And murders, yet adores,"

which forcibly and poignantly brought up the vanished image of his own love, so cruelly lost to him by the influence of a passion, mere momentary, yet quite as disastrous in its results. His kindled fancy even beheld in the Desdemona of the evening features akin to those of the lost one. But when she sang the first verse of her English song:

"I have a secret sorrow here—
A grief I'll ne'er impart;
It breathes no sigh, it sheds no tear,
But it consumes my heart,"—

he murmured—"it was her song—it is her voice—it is herself,"—and fell back fainting in the arms of Trelawney.

The latter instantly drew the curtains of the box to screen the incident from the eyes of the audience, and hastened in search of remedies. When he returned, he found the prima donna's mother in the box, bathing the forehead of the unfortunate nobleman, while tears were streaming copiously from her eyes. She begged Trelawney, in a few hurried words, to go for her daughter, the curtain having just fallen.

In a few minutes, Wildair opened his eyes. "It is a dream," he said feebly. "Some fiend mocked me with a vision of the past." Then gazing fixedly on the strange lady, as she sat in the dim light, he said: "I must be very ill—I am the victim of singular illusions to-night. Where is my friend?"

"He will return directly," replied the lady, in a tremulous voice, in the English tongue.

"That voice again!" cried Wildair, springing up. "Speak! and in God's name, tell me who you are?"

"Herbert, have you forgotten me?" was the reply.

"Amanda!" cried Wildair. "I shall go mad. But—" he extended his quivering hands—"am I forgiven?"

"Am *I* forgiven?" replied Lady Wildair, in a voice of anguish.

She was folded in her husband's arms. The door of the box opened. A younger Amanda, now, divested of her stage attire, the image of her mother in her youthful days, stood before the strangely re-united pair.

"And who—who is this, Amanda?" cried Wildair. "Did you, when you fled from my brutality, marry again?"

"No, Herbert," replied Lady Wildair. "This is your own daughter. May she be a bond of union between us!"

There are some scenes which it is alike impossible for pen and pencil to depict. This meeting of father and daughter was one of them. The party returned to Wildair's hotel. There it was that he learned how, impelled by pride, resentment and blighted affection, Lady Wildair, fled from her husband's house—and from England; how her reason gave way beneath the pressure of suffering, how her child saw the light in a foreign land, what feelings and what reasonings deferred her return, until such time as she learned that Wildair had plunged into a career of dissipation, exaggerated by evil tongues, which scrupled not to charge him with the formation of new ties. The scene at Wildair Hall had induced her to believe that she had formed a false estimate of his character, and coupled, with subsequent intelligence, deterred her from rejoining him with her child. The story was an illustration of the fatal effects that often follow one false step. Supporting herself by the exercise of her musical talent, she had contrived to live (under an assumed name), and to educate her daughter, until the latter, recognized as a singer of the highest talent, found herself in the path of fame and fortune.

But the past was forgotten in the rushing tide of the present joy. Trelawney was united to the young prima donna, and the Christmas of that year found them all beneath the stately roof of Wildair Hall, the happiest family in "Merrie England."

SELF-CONTROL.

It seems to me that all times are alike adapted for happiness, and that if we grow old as one should grow old, the last days of life must be happiest of all. Each stage of life is but the preparation for the next one. It is the treasure-house in which are collected all the pleasures that are to make the future time happy. The child has indeed but few troubles, but they are as great to him as larger ones prove to his parent. I asked a friend once, speaking of the happy, cloudless days of childhood, if he would like to be always a child? He stopped for a moment and then said no. I think he was right. There is progress in everything—in our means of happiness and in our capacity for enjoyment. Then let us not look back upon the time-wrinkled face of the past only with feelings of regret. Give me the present, glowing and full of life, and the future glorious with bright visions. I would rather look forward than back; rather spend the golden hours in working out present happiness than in vain regrets for the past. It is but the helm with which to steer our outward course. The future lies before us. It is the steep and rugged mountain up which lies our way. It is not genius or fortune that paves the way to eminence, but earnestness, self-control, wisdom. These are in our hands; let us use them, and when at the sunset of life we turn to look back on our path, and see it stretching far down before us peacefully, happily, we may lay ourselves down to rest.—*Thackeray.*

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION.

FREDERICK GLEASON, PROPRIETOR.

MATURIN M. BALLOU, EDITOR.

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⁂ All communications designed for publication in the paper, must be addressed to F. GLEASON, BOSTON, MASS., *proprietor of* THE FLAG OF OUR UNION, *post paid.*

CONTENTS OF OUR NEXT NUMBER.

"A Prince for ten Minutes," a tale by FRANCIS A. DURIVAGE.

"The Gipsy's Threat, or the English Gardener," a story by M. V. ST. LEON.

"A Cool Reception," a humorous sketch by THE OLD 'UN.

"The Lost Pocket Book," a story by Miss CAROLINE ORNE.

"Ida Eveleth," a tale, by M. B. C. SLADE.

"The Goodly Rest," a poem by JOHN K. HOLMES.

"Tribute to the Memory of Miss M. J. G."

"Sleeping beauty," lines by J. ALFORD.

"There is Sorrow in my Heart," stanzas by HORACE G. BOUGHMAN.

"Cora Lee," verses by ELLEN M. SMITH.

"To Consolation," lines by JOSEPH H. BUTLER.

ARTICLES DECLINED.

"June," "War," "Delia," "The Rose's Love," "Rest, noble Fireman," "'Twas not her sunny Smile," "On hearing an Organ," "Theodore," "Sorrow," "Clara's Prayer," "The Valley Farm," "Sunset Clouds," and "The Chieftain's Daughter."

RISE AND PROGRESS.

By what seeming trifles are the destinies of nations guided, and how important may be the results of the simplest moves. Those acts which we perform with certain purposes, and in anticipation of certain results, are often overruled by Providence, for some wise and good reason, incomprehensible to us, into channels that we had never dreamed of. When Joseph's brethren sold him into slavery, they meant it unto evil, but God meant it unto good, and overruled it to that end. We know not what a day may bring forth, we know not what fate has in store for us, nor what we should be called upon to perform. Such thoughts strike us in realizing a bit of personal history lately made public.

The past history of the families of Louis Napoleon and the Sultan of Turkey is full of interesting and marvellous incidents, some of which are, probably, not generally known to our readers. These two monarchs, now so cordially united in the struggle to maintain the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, are both grandsons of American ladies. These ladies were born and raised in the same neighborhood, on the island of Martinique, one of the West Indies. They were of French origin, and companions and intimate friends in childhood and youth. They were Josephine Tascher and a Miss S——. The history of Josephine is generally known. She went to France, and was married to M. De Beauharnais, by whom she had one son, Eugene, and a daughter, Hortense.

Some time after the death of Beauharnais, Josephine was married to Napoleon Bonaparte, and became Empress of France. Her daughter, Hortense, was married to Louis Bonaparte, then King of Holland, and the present Emperor of France is her son by that marriage. Miss S—— quitted the island of Martinique some time before her friend; but the vessel that was carrying her to France was attacked and taken by the Algerine corsairs, and the crew and passengers made prisoners. But this corsair ship was in turn attacked and pillaged by Tunis pirates, and Miss S—— was carried by them to Constantinople, and offered for sale as a slave. Her extraordinary beauty and accomplishments found her a purchaser in the Sultan himself; and she soon became the chief lady of the seraglio, and Sultana of Turkey. Mahmoud II. was her son, and the present Sultan, Abdul Medjid, is the son of Mahmoud.

Thus the two sovereigns who now occupy so large a space in the world's eye are the grandsons of two American creole girls, who were playmates in their youth, and were as remarkable for their beauty and excellent dispositions as for their varied and singular fortunes. Both of these women, in their prosperity, remembered all the friends of their youth, and provided munificently for their welfare. Many of the relatives of this sultana left the island of Martinique, and settled at Constantinople, where their descendants still reside, and enjoy the favor of the sultan. The sultana died in 1811, and Josephine some four years after, and their grandsons now rule over two wide and powerful empires; and have entered, as friends and allies, upon one of the most momentous and sanguinary struggles in which Europe was ever involved.

PROFITABLE SPECULATION.—There is a room in the Crystal Palace, at New York, assigned to lost articles picked up by the police. They have three hundred lace cambric handkerchiefs, some valued at $50; also as many veils, a large stock of gloves, an extensive assortment of babies' shoes and stockings, and some hundred articles of jewelry, pieces of which range as high as $100 in value.

THE WHOOPING COUGH.—Late English papers speak of the extraordinary fatality of the whooping cough in that country. The deaths from that cause in London, for the three months previous to April 1st, were 941. This is more than double the number for the same time in previous years.

SCOTCH GIRLS.—A hundred or more Scotch girls recently arrived, have gone to work in the Holyoke Mass. Mills. They were sent for. Scotch girls, we believe, are considered as belonging to the best class of factory operatives. They are industrious, thrifty and economical.

TOLLS.—The receipts of tolls on the two bridges between Boston and Charlestown, amount to about twenty-five hundred dollars per week.

THE INDIAN WAR.

Almost every arrival from Texas and the Indian territory brings intelligence of the depredations of Indians upon American property, and attacks upon parties in the legitimate pursuit of their business, and even upon small parties of United States troops. The last accounts from Western Texas represent Wild Cat as at the head of five hundred Seminole and Camanche Indians, who recently attacked a small party of soldiers and traders, killing nearly the entire party of soldiers, twenty-five in number, and some thirty traders, among whom were six Americans. Several other scattering squads were also killed in the vicinity, and one family. The Indians were heard to say during the fight that they would kill everything and desolate the country to the Rio Grande. The Western Texan, alluding to these depredations, says: Wild Cat is at the head of all this, and we believe that the Mexican nation holds about the same position with these Indians that England held with the American Indian tribes in the United States and Canada during the Revolution and the late war. However, we will not go so far as to say that Mexico offers these Indians a reward for each scalp, but we know that they have great inducements held out to them; and as for Wild Cat, he is now returning his compliments to our government for the many favors they have granted him, and he, no doubt, expects that we shall sooner or later purchase his friendship by giving him "big heap of money;" and, regarding his treatment heretofore, he has very plausible reasons to expect this.

The United States government should take this marauder in hand, and teach him a lesson which will be of service to him and his followers.

IMPRESSMENT OF SEAMEN.

The British government has revived a most disgraceful practice—that of forcing seamen who have been taken prisoners of war to serve in the navy, where they are of course likely to be called upon to fight against their own country. A Russian barque, the Argo, from Matanzas bound to an English port, the master of which unfortunately confided in the generosity of the British government or was not aware that war had been declared, was captured while going into port. The cargo, which was on British account, was released, but the vessel was delivered over to the prize commissioners. The captain was set at liberty on parole, and twelve of the crew were drafted on board her majesty's ship Crocodile.

The barbarous custom of impressing prisoners of war was enforced, it will be recollected, in the last war between England and this country, and many an American was forced at the point of the bayonet to fight against his own countrymen. Its revival is an evidence that, although the principles of humanity may have become more widely prevalent among individuals, *civilized* war has been robbed of none of its barbarous features.

SIGNIFICANT.

The first act of the Russian cabinet on the receipt of the intelligence of the treaty between Prussia and Austria, recognizing the independence of the Lower Danube, as a part of the sultan's dominions, to be an important condition of the interests of Germany, and contemplating a summons to Russia to evacuate the Principalities, was to *double the levies* of men for the current year. The Czar seems determined to make good his words that he "would never yield." England and France are both also increasing their armies. The allies seem at last to see the magnitude of the task they have undertaken and are now preparing for a long and terrible war. Their first efforts were those of intimidation only; but Nicholas has shown that he is not to be deterred from his purpose by a mere show of force, and that he can give blow for blow when it comes to the close encounter.

LOUIS NAPOLEON.—A young American artist was engaged, not long since, in copying, at the Louvre, Murillo's Virgin and Child—they were bought by the State, at Marshal Soult's Gallery. The emperor happened to visit the Museum that day, and stopped opposite the Murillo. "Your majesty desires to see the original?" said the American, preparing to withdraw his easel. "No, sir," said the emperor, "I want to see the copy; I have been told it is a very successful one." And the emperor had made a friend for life. In personal intercourse, his majesty is affable to a rare degree, and is singularly happy in obtaining people's good opinion, in a social point of view.

JENNY LIND GOLDSCHMIDT.—A letter from Vienna says that Jenny Lind Goldschmidt is at Vienna, giving concerts. She appears somewhat older, but retains the frankness and simplicity of manners which have characterized her above all other artists. She informed the writer of this letter of her expectations to settle permanently in the United States, mainly on account of her child, a bright little boy.

A GREAT TRUTH.—In a decision recently in the Methodist Protestant General Conference, the Rev. George Brown, in speaking of the discretionary power of an editor, said he deserved as much credit for keeping some things out of the paper as he did for putting other things in.

PISCATORY.—Our Nova Scotia neighbors are striving to prevent the fish from being driven out of their streams or restrained from entering them by the dams of the millers and lumbermen.

HEAVY LOSSES.—The loss by the great fire in Worcester lately, exceeds $500,000, destroying a broad field of business, and throwing some 1500 persons out of employment.

RESTITUTION.—The New York National Fire Insurance Co. have received $2289 from an unknown person who says he defrauded them of that amount.

LOCUSTS.—The seventeenth-year locusts have made their periodical visit in several sections at the West.

EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

Edward Dwyer, a dwarf, committed suicide at New York, recently. A love affair.

Freedom from pain is of itself pleasure, but to know this, one must have suffered.

Over two hundred dogs were poisoned in two days by the Cincinnati police.

Firemen's riots are again becoming frequent in Philadelphia.

The silent eye is often a more powerful conqueror than the noisy tongue.

The population of Louisville, Ky., is now estimated at 70,000.

Retribution is a law of nature, and the one most important for us to study.

A Ladies' Academy of Fine Arts has been organized in Cincinnati.

To prevent boils—take a table spoonful of yeast in a glass of water, twice a day.

Artillery was first used by the Moors in Spain, at the siege of Algesiras, A. D. 1341.

Arrived—the lady with ten flounces. The man who admires them is out of town.

Milo B. Hall of Fairfield, Vt., was struck by lightning and instantly killed, on the 6th ult.

A brilliant talker is not always liked by those whom he has most amused.

Forty liquor dealers in the ninth ward in New York, have been indicted for selling ardent spirits.

California now grows more rye and wheat, and makes more butter than she requires.

He that would reprove the world, must be one whom the world cannot reprove.

C. C. Johnson, convicted of murder at Harrisburg, Pa., is to be hung August 24th.

A fire occurred at Lexington, Mo., recently, destroying $40,000 worth of property.

When the winds of applause blow fresh and strong, then steer with a steady hand.

Within the past month, Dan Rice has cleared in Mississippi by his circus, $13,000.

Will is the root, knowledge the stem and leaves, feeling the flower.

WONDERFUL CURIOSITY.

The Cleveland Herald furnishes an item worthy of the attention of all lovers of the curious. The novelty is in Brian, Williams county, Ohio, and is described as follows:—"It is supposed by some that there is an underground lake, at the depth of some forty or fifty feet, of considerable extent, as water has been found, when bored for, for several miles around. The amount of water discharged by these fountains, however, is not proportionate or equal—they vary considerably in different parts of the town, the strongest ones being generally east of Main street. The water can be raised in proportion to the stream forced up. There are several that fill a two inch auger-hole, at the height of eight feet above the surface of the earth, and the others issue a somewhat smaller stream to the height of twelve or fifteen feet. Some of the larger ones frequently throw up small fish, and we are told that there is a very strong fountain about a mile east of this place, in which fish of a blackish color, of the length of three inches, have been seen. Water is found at an average depth of 42 feet.

TREATY OF RECIPROCITY.—A treaty is understood to have been concluded between Mr. Marcy and Mr. Crampton, which is now before the British cabinet for its consideration, and is satisfactory to the colonies. It provides for the relinquishment of the impost duty upon fish; the mutual right of fishing on the coasts of the provinces, including the bays and gulf of St. Lawrence, the coasts of the United States, except the shad fishery in the bays and rivers, and the fisheries on the coast of Florida; the removal of duty from a long catalogue of articles of exchange between us and the provinces; the withdrawal of our bounty on fish; and the abolition of the duty on coal.

UNPARALLELED IMMIGRATION.—During the month of May, 57,566 passengers from foreign countries arrived at New York alone. Of these, 3937 were citizens of the United States, and 53,629 aliens. There were 22,129 aliens from ports in Great Britain; 18,320 from German ports; 12,846 from French ports; 250 from the West Indies; and 84 from South America. We think the whole number exceeds by some 10,000 the greatest number ever recorded for one month.

A QUEER PROFESSORSHIP.—The government of Harvard College are said to be completely nonplussed by a recent bequest of $15,000 left by Miss Caroline Plummer, lately deceased at Salem, Mass., for the endowment of a new professorship on the "Philosophy of the Heart." It is said they don't know whether it is to be an anatomical, a physiological, or a sentimental chair.

JAPAN.—Government has received despatches from Commodore Perry, affirming that Japan had acceded to the proposition of the United States, and that Russia has not forestalled us.

MIGHT BE EXPECTED.—A number of persons have died of cholera lately, in a building on Cherry street, New York, said to be occupied by three hundred Irish families.

GLEASON'S PICTORIAL DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION,

For the present week embraces the following contents:

"The Young Gentleman, whom nobody understood," a story, by JOHN M. GUERNSEY.

"A Summer Romance," by FRANCIS A. DURIVAGE.

"House Cleaning," a sketch, by Mrs. M. E. ROBINSON.

"Notes of Foreign Travel," No. 3, by F. GLEASON.

"The Banker's Prisoner," a tale, by Mrs. CAROLINE A. SOULE.

"The Imprisoned Robin," stanzas, by Mrs. Sarah E. DAWES.

"To Annette," lines, by EUNICE BROWN.

"My Old Piano," verses, by D. M. F. WALKER.

"Where is the Creator," lines, by SYDNEY E. CHURCH.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

This week's number contains a sporting scene, applicable to the month, entitled Bass-Fishing.

Two pages of scenes in Java, giving, first, a view of a Tea Plantation at Simpar; second, a picture of the House of the Dutch Resident at Sourabaya; third, Ruins of Modjopahit—Temple at Mosteran; fourth, Fountain of Djelok Toundo; fifth, Ruins of Pampang, Matsan Poutih.

View of the fishing-port of Gloucester, Mass.

A picture of a Gloucester Fishing Schooner.

A view of the Capture of a Fishing Vessel by a British Cruiser.

A representation of the Monmouth Battle Ground, New Jersey, celebrated as the field of one of the Revolutionary [illegible]

View of the Ruins of Blarney Castle, near Cork, Ireland.

The village of Ticonderoga, N. Y.

Portrait of Miss Cordelia Howard, the little prodigy on the stage.

View of Willoughby Lake House, Westmore, Vt.

⁂ The PICTORIAL is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at six cents per copy.

Foreign Items.

Uniformity of color in dress is the rage in Paris.

It is said that numbers of the Chinese insurgents are armed with Colt's revolvers.

Louis Napoleon's cousin, Prince Lucien Bonaparte, second son of the Prince de Canino, has taken holy orders.

England and France have demanded of Spain 24,000 men for the occupation of Greece and Palestine. Spain refuses unconditionally.

A fine English horse, destined for Omar Pasha, arrived at Chalons, a short time ago, on its way to the East. It has a horse-cloth richly embroidered with the arms of that distinguished general.

The Admiralty, without sanctioning any new expedition to search for Sir John Franklin, have determined that such orders shall be issued to Sir E. Belcher, as will empower him to continue the search.

Father Gavazzi is now lecturing in Dublin. If he gets out of Ireland without his head being broken, which is doubtful, he intends to return to the United States to resume his lectures upon Romanism.

A letter from one of the Baltic officers says that Napier walks on board in shabby trousers, and a pair of old purser's shoes, his coat is very plain, and no affectation whatever about him, but enters freely into conversation with the blue jackets.

The war in Europe affects the pockets of the English literati to some extent. The subscription list of the Times newspaper is thinned—the made-up books of the war do not sell. Macaulay's third and fourth volumes are postponed—Dickens's new novel falls flat on the town—and Thackeray's "Newcomes" does not go off freely.

Dewdrops of Wisdom.

Weep for love, but not for anger; a cold rain will never bring flowers.—*Duncan.*

Most men have more courage than even they themselves think they have.—*Greville.*

Make no enemies; he is insignificant indeed that can do thee no harm.—*Lacon.*

Those who declaim loudest against money-getting are often the most avaricious.—*Bailey.*

The whole world has taken the place of Rome, in granting indulgences to the rich.—*Nye.*

The eye is a sure index to the character. Physiognomy reveals the secrets of the heart.—*Lee.*

Mean spirits under disappointment, like small beer in a thunder storm, always turn sour.—*Randolph.*

The testimony of those who doubt the least, is, not unusually, that very testimony that ought most to be doubted.—*Colton.*

We should do by our cunning as we do by our courage—always have it ready to defend ourselves, never to offend others.—*Greville.*

None are too wise to be mistaken, but few are so wisely just as to acknowledge and correct their mistakes—and especially the mistakes of prejudice.—*Barrow.*

The web of our lives is a mingled yarn. Our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair, if not redeemed by our virtues.—*Burke.*

Affection, like spring flowers, breaks through the most frozen ground at last: and the heart which seeks for another heart to make it happy, will never seek in vain.—*Drake.*

Swearing is properly a superfluity of naughtiness, and can only be considered as a sort of pepper-corn rent, in acknowledgement of the devil's right of superiority.—*Robert Hall.*

Joker's Budget.

The man who was "behind the times," proposes to get round in front.

If a magazine contained a number of tales, say four, could you call it a four story magazine?

Why is a bow-legged man like a holiday down South? Because you see the *knee grows out!* (*negroes out.*)

To make a Russian name—imitate the "tchug" of a bull-frog, give one sneeze, and say "ski."

A very absent-minded gentleman being upset by a boat into the river, sunk twice before he remembered he could swim.

"Labor is honorable," says the Boston Post. It may be honorable, but it is mighty inconvenient, when the thermometer is about 90 in the shade.

Some gallant defender of Lola Montes recently wrote, "She is pure innocence." The wicked types, however, printed it, "She is pure *in no sense.*"

"Come here, my dear, I want to ask you all about your sister. Now, tell me truly—has she got a beau?" "No, it's the janders she's got; the doctor says so."

A fellow up town threatened to blow his brains out. He can't do it. It's a thing that *fools* are incapable of. Where there is nothing to blow, what's the use of blowing?

A chap from the country, stopping at one of the hotels in New York, being asked by the waiter whether he would have green or black tea, replied, he didn't care a darn what color it was, so that it had plenty of sweetnin' in it.

A kiss, sent a thousand miles by a saddle-bag mail, scarce arrives more cold and vapid, than many a bright thought launched in the light of a passing circumstance, but left behind in an eddy of yesterday.

Quill and Scissors.

Sailors are very scarce, and there is in New York much difficulty in getting crews. It is said that a large number have been diverted to the service of the government, which now pays the sailor more liberally than in years past. The government pays $15 per month, with $45 advance, and $30 bounty, making $75 in advance.

Pigeons are abundant in western New York. In Fulton, Hamilton and Herkimer counties, immense flocks are nesting, and from 4 to 7 A. M. are out in swarms. Thousands are taken in nets every day, and sportsmen, with or without experience, have but little difficulty in taking a dozen, if the musket "scatters" well.

Dr. Martin, an American, is in China, fighting with the rebels. He has a leading position in the army of insurgents, and though several times wounded, seems to have escaped all serious harm. He says he was a physician in Carthage, Ohio, and took a hand in the Mexican war.

About 100 barrels of soft soap are supposed to be used each week at the public works at Randall's Island, New York. From an analysis of the soap, lately made, it was discovered that there was only one gallon of soap in the barrel, the remainder being water.

The insurance companies in New York have now offered five thousand dollars reward for the detection and conviction of the incendiary of the store of the Messrs. Jennings on Broadway—a calamity which, it will be remembered, cost so many lives.

A farmer at Manchester, Va., has a hen who lays the tallest kind of eggs. He lately sent a specimen of her quality to the editor of the Richmond Dispatch, measuring 8 1-2 inches one way, and 6 1-2 the other.

A boat with six persons in it was accidentally upset on Winthrop's Pond, in Holliston, on Sunday the 11th inst., and two young men by the names of Michael Kanally and Edmund Rawley, were drowned.

The Cincinnati Gazette states that the culture of the grape is rapidly extending through the interior of Ohio, and thus a foundation is being laid for a heavy and most important trade in native wine.

In Trenton, N. Y., five men were recently sentenced to pay $10, to stay in jail ten days, and give bonds in $3000 to keep the peace, for having corrected the partners of their bosoms by flagellation.

A western paper is enthusiastic in its praise of the fire department of that place, on the occasion of a late fire. The department consists of a wash-tub, seven pails, and a large size syringe.

In Hartford, Md., seven little children were crossing a stream of water, when a plank which supported them broke, and three out of the seven were drowned; aged thirteen, nine, and seven years.

Mr. William Landon, in Guilford, Ct., committed suicide on Saturday week, by jumping into a well, while laboring under temporary insanity. His age was 51, and he leaves a family.

Justus Squires who was sentenced to the New Hampshire State Prison for heavy robberies a few months since, committed suicide on Monday week in prison, by taking poison.

Mr. Isham Williams, of Madison county, Ga., came to his death, 29th ult., from being stung on the arm by a wasp. He died in less than ten minutes after being stung.

Frowns cost as much as smiles, while the latter pay a vast deal better profit than the former. Which then are the most desirable? Try a yard or two and examine.

A late waggish printer, while on his death bed, was requested "to be composed." "Distributed, you mean," was his faint reply.

The man who "beat time" was not fast enough for the telegraph wires. He has been arrested and held to bail for the offence.

If a pair of glasses are spectacles, is one a spectacle? And if so, is it not a bad show for a sight?

Two young men in Salem have been fined $10 for plucking flowers from a grave in a cemetery in that city.

Wanted to know—the exact length of the rope used when a man is "tied to time."

They are young ladies of narrow understanding who wear shoes to small for them.

Hobbs has never yet "picked" Locke on the understanding.

Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Mr. Streeter, Mr. Oliver E. Weston to Miss Sophia F. Lundsteen.

By Rev. Mr. Schwarz, Mr. Adam Helfenstein to Miss Rebecca Watson.

By Rev. Mr. Huntington, Mr. Samuel S. William to Mrs. Susan A. Hutchinson.

By Rev. Mr. Stowe, Mr. Augustus Connell to Miss Mary Connell.

In Chelsea, by Rev. Mr. Dunbar, Mr. James Powers to Miss Eilenor M. Morby.

In Somerville, by Rev. Mr. Mayall, Mr. Francis W. Wilder to Miss Mary F. Emerson.

In Stoneham, Mr. E. Thomas Green to Miss Sarah Jane Perry.

In Salem, by Rev. Mr. Thompson, Mr. Benjamin M. Perkins to Miss Martha C. Very.

In Watertown, by Rev. Mr. Edwards, Mr. George N. March, of the firm of Locke, March & Co., to Miss Harriette H. Dunn, adopted daughter of Newell Brown, Esq.

In Lowell, by Rev. Mr. Eddy, Mr. William French to Mrs. Amanda Goodwin.

In Lawrence, by Rev. Mr. Thayer, Rev. J. R. Johnson to Miss Parasina Morse.

In Plymouth, by Rev. Dr. Kendall, Mr. Charles L. Coleman to Miss Caroline Full.

In Raynham, by Rev. Mr. Carver, Mr. Davis King to Miss Sophia C. Briggs.

In Nantucket, by Rev. Mr. Philbrook, Mr. George F. Brown to Miss Sarah M. Nerbeth.

In Saco, Me., by Rev. Mr. Cowell, Mr. George Ross to Miss Sarah Moore.

In Manchester, N. H., by Rev. Mr. Tillotson, Mr. George F. Saltmarsh to Miss Mary A. Gove, both of Weare, N. H.

Deaths.

In this city, Miss Alice Brown, 45; Mr. Valentine Brown, 46; Mrs. Lucy Margaret, wife of Mr. Thomas G. Easterbrook, 29; Mr. Richard House, 64; Mrs. Clarissa Purkitt Kidder, 78; Mr. Walter H. Allison, 61; Henry W. Prince, 15.

At Charlestown, Mrs. Elvira Miller, 31; Mrs. Eleanor Lloyd Doyle, 25.

At East Boston, Captain George W. Cottrell, 36.

At Dorchester, Edward Winslow, son of the late Rev. John Brazer, D. D., of Salem, 22.

At Cohasset, Captain Abraham Tower, 54.

At Lynn, Mrs. Mary B. Brackett, 40; Mrs. Maria, wife of Mr. Benjamin Shaw, 20.

At Salem, Miss Mary Jane, daughter of Mr. George S. Arrington, 16.

At Watertown, Mr. Elisha M. Hall, 82.

At Lowell, Mr. Samuel Garland, 62; Miss Mary Ann Maria Trow, 15.

At Davenport, Captain William Francis, 78.

At South Scituate, Miss Mary Stetson, 90.

At Haverhill, Miss Hannah Whittier, 81; Mrs. Achsah M. Smith, 28.

At Oakham, Mrs. Mary L. Robinson, 33.

At Hubbardston, Mrs. Dorcas Pollard, 56; John F. Clark, Esq., 24.

At Barre, Mr. Edward B. Bowker, 33.

At Phillipston, Miss Nancy Brown, 47.

At Athol, Mr. Moses P. Ball, 59.

At Yarmouth Port, Mr. Ensus Hallett, 87; Mrs. Emeline Baker, 27.

At Fall River, Miss Elizabeth A. Peckham, 25.

At Auburn, N. H., Mr. Oliver Miles, formerly of Boston, 36.

At Bath, Luke Lombard, Esq., 34.

At Halifax, Vt., Mrs. Martha Smith, 94.

At Marlboro', Vt., Mrs. Deliverance Pratt, 97.

At East Windsor, Conn., Rev. Shubael Bartlett, 76.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LIFE WELL SPENT.

BY JOHN KING.

O, be thine the satisfaction
  That thou'st well performed thy part;
Let thy past and present action
  Be at peace with all the heart.

Time with us is not abiding,
  Like streams rushing to the sea;
Its current is swiftly gliding
  To a vast eternity.

If thou'd stamp thy name forever
  With great deeds of nobleness,
Cease thy onward struggle never,
  Save at the approach of death.

Be thy acts a just example
  Of the heart thou bear'st within;
Hearts of goodness broad and ample,
  Love and confidence will win.

All good deeds in the distant ages,
  Plain written as with a pen,
Shall stand out upon the pages
  Of the living hearts of men.

And there like some grand old story,
  That doth nerve us while we hear,
In all their nobleness and glory
  Shall forevermore appear.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

MABEL SEFTON:

—OR,—

THE WARD AND GUARDIAN.

BY ADELAIDE HARRIS.

CHAPTER I.

The morning sun is shining with mellowed radiance through the soft haze of a summer atmosphere, and sends great bars of golden mist down the green glades and velvet slopes of a park in "merrie England."

Huge trees cluster together making great arches with their graceful boughs which twine about each other in loving fellowship, waving, whispering and caressing, as the south wind breathes its blessing on them.

Beneath one solitary oak around which the grass is so fresh and smooth, it might be the dancing hall of Queen Titania, is gathered a herd of brown deer. They halt suddenly, and with startled look glance their bright eyes toward a distant carriage-road. A sound of voices approaches, and with heads thrown back and ears erect, they trot away down one of the many wood-lanes, brushing as they pass a hedge of honey-suckle, which sends up a sigh of fragrant perfume at their rudeness.

"Ah ha, Sir Robert, you affect the rustic withal," exclaimed the younger of a party of three cavaliers, as he threw himself upon a seat at the foot of the great oak.

"Not I, in truth, Master Hubert. What you see of grace or beauty hereabout, which Nature hath not done, ascribe to the ladies Alice and Mabel."

"There is not a little grace and taste displayed here with this cover of sweets twining overhead. If it were not for bees hovering forever about these gay beauties, I think I might fancy them myself."

"The flowers are much obliged to you, I dare say," said Sir Thomas Clifford, their companion, as he seated himself by Hubert's side. "But it is quite as well," he added, laughingly, "that they have somewhat to defend them from your admiration."

"Now I beg you will say nothing I must resent, Clifford; this is such an exquisite place for a day-dream, I would not have it disturbed," answered Hubert, leaning back with an air of affected languor quite ridiculous in connection with the merry blue eyes and animated countenance he possessed.

"I could easily fancy myself one of those, to-be-envied sylvan deities, with attendant dryads to anticipate my every wish. Stafford's face yonder, looking so coldly dignified, does not help to carry out the fancy, however."

"Nay, that it does not, his countenance has more than once served as a check to your fervid fancy. Is it not so?"

"To check, yes, but not chill it. Sir Robert's good faith I believe to be invincible."

After a moment's silence, he continued:

"Some one must have superintended this bower's arrangement, who had an eye for the picturesque; what think you, was it the Lady Alice?"

Clifford, pretending not to notice the significant emphasis and roguish look which accompanied the mention of the Lady Alice, called to Sir Robert, who had walked to a distance.

"Some one sits here methinks, who loves to look at Stafford House; sit there a moment, Sir Robert. Between those trees there is a fine view of the eastern wing."

"Your own particular turret, too," said Hubert, rising. "Little farther to the right you will get a better view."

Stafford seated himself as required, and looked at the scene carelessly at first, then as if a new thought had taken possession of his mind, long and earnestly—he seemed to have forgotten his companions, and fallen into a fit of musing.

"Well," said Hubert, with a long drawn sigh, "I would not have proposed, had I thought it would strike you dumb."

"You were not affected in that manner, certainly," said Clifford, laughing.

Sir Robert started from the seat at their remarks, and cutting down a branch of the overhanging honeysuckle with his riding whip, exclaimed:

"You, gentlemen, both may be better acquainted with this part of the grounds than myself. I never come this way."

"This, then, is the ladies' walk?" asked Clifford; "the Lady Alice said you left one particular haunt for them."

"Yes, and I never intrude."

"I doubt much, Stafford, if any lady would consider your presence an intrusion. The disinclination lies with you."

"Perhaps so," he answered coldly, and very soon remembering an engagement, he left them.

"There," said Hubert, looking after him, "goes a most courteous gentleman, with one exception; mention the subject feminine, and you who were in the tropics, immediately face an iceberg. Why is this? Sir Clifford, canst tell me?"

"Not I, it passes my wisdom."

"One might think some fair dame had played him false, only I would as soon expect Mont Blanc to give any woman the chance."

"There was a time when he avoided the subject laughingly, disclaiming all knowledge—now he avoids it with a kind of bitterness."

"True, I noticed that to-day."

"Heard you last night, Hubert, his answer to the Lady Alice's *badinage*?"

"Yes, that he was too old now to play the gallant," and she added with a merry laugh, "we can find some one, perhaps, as ancient as you."

"I must say he looked excessively grim," answered Clifford. "Yet never was there braver man or kinder heart than hath and is Sir Robert Stafford."

"Trust me, Clifford, it is something more than a silver hair now and then among his raven locks, which has given this added sternness to his manner. I for one would dare mighty deeds with a head like Stafford's on my shoulders. What say you?"

"The same, good Master Hubert; but what think you, should he even now bear away from a certain cavalier a fair damsel we wot of? See yonder Stafford House, as we approach it in its exceeding beauty, may well lay claim to the best and fairest, having such a master as Sir Robert."

"Faith, Sir Clifford, you have learned croaking well, and by the mass, to fulfil it, he is walking now upon the terrace with Mistress Mabel."

Sir Robert Stafford had been the guardian of his niece, the Lady Alice, since her seventh birthday, when she was left an orphan—and he had served in the same capacity to the daughter of his old friend and brother in-arms, Walter Sefton, for nearly the same length of time. The Lady Alice is just seventeen, and Mabel Sefton has just passed her eighteenth year. Stafford House rang with their gay and childish merriment, and its walls echo laughter still, more silvery sweet, if not as easily heard. The mirth of girlish hearts, even old Time must feel a twinge of regret, as he puts forth his skinny finger to check and chill. Many a trick of wood craft had they learned of old Adam the forester. Mabel, especially, was well skilled in archery, and could draw the bow and wing an arrow with a precision which challenged all competition. Good horse-women they were both, besides being skilled in all the accomplishments of their day.

Sir Robert had discharged his duty faithfully, and might well be proud of his success. So said lookers-on, but in truth, except as far as giving orders that they should be obeyed in everything, and then leaving home to their control for years at a time, he had very little to do with directing their youthful steps towards womanhood. Without doubt, if the gay Lad Alice had insisted, on some of his few returns t Stafford House, that it was proper for hersel and Mabel to secure a band of retainers, do suits of armor, and at their head join Kin Charles's standard, he would have stopped hi usual pacing up and down the terrace, turne his grave, handsome face upon her, and no even looking beyond to see the shy, lily-lik Mabel, would have inquired when he shoul order the equipments. Yet he was alway kindness' self to the children, and kissed then with a fatherly care on his coming and departure until his last return, when the two graceful girl who greeted him, presenting their taper finger instead of blushing cheeks for a caress, startle him for a moment, and looking at them with shade of surprise on his countenance, he aske their age. Seventeen and eighteen—he did no quite remember to which belonged the one o the other, but the fact suggested many thoughts What was he to do now—surely it were mucl easier for him to face an advancing host and do in deadly combat, than appear at court with his youthful wards. Yet that something more was required of him now than formerly, at first a vague idea, soon became conviction. Revolving this thought in his mind, he left the grand saloon, where, according to the fancy of the merry Alice, they had given him somewhat of a stately reception.

Crossing the entrance hall up the great oaken stair-case, and through many a dimly lighted corridor, he sought his own apartments. They were situated in the extreme eastern wing of the house, quite away from the main body, and here alone he felt at home. Sir Robert upon entering, glanced around the lofty rooms, then throwing aside his plumed cap, he unbuckled from his side a richly chased short sword, and seated himself in one of the deep windows which overlooked the verdant landscape.

Home with its beauties—home with its memories of by-gone years—thoughts gathered from past and present were rushing to his heart for recognition, on this first day of his return, this first hour of solitude—but he thrust aside the secret sorrow of recollection, and resolutely set himself to meditate on disagreeable duties. Disagreeable, because unusual, and most unlike his customary habits of taste. It was necessary that these gay terraces and pleasant halls should no longer be deserted, that youth, beauty and gayety should have full sway and possession for a time at least. In the few words which the Lady Alice had spoken on his arrival, this idea was sufficiently prominent to prove without difficulty, her views and wishes. He did not recollect if Mabel agreed with her, but that was not strange, as he could not remember if she had ever made a request of him herself.

His house must be opened to the surrounding gentry, and echo mirth as it had not since years ago, when his elder brother brought there his youthful bride, the mother of the Lady Alice. He had in those days found pleasure in playing the page to the beautiful Lady Stafford. He would now try to enact the father for her daughter, as well as the daughter of his old friend. He hoped to call about them all the guests that his wards might require, and investing them with all necessary power to preside, withdraw himself from the merry rout at pleasure.

Yonder were the abbey turrets, visible through the trees, and as his eye glanced upon them, it confirmed a resolution in his mind to seek and consult the lady abbess. The girls, without residing for any length of time with the sacred sisterhood, had been, notwithstanding, much under their guidance. The merry Alice making them laugh in spite of themselves behind the elaborate embroideries over which they toiled, and the quiet Mabel winning all their hearts by her gentle goodness.

It was the place Sir Robert should seek above all others to learn somewhat of his proteges, he being quite as ignorant of their characters as the veriest stranger. Accordingly, he left the apartment where he had been sitting, and passing through several others connected with his own, entered the long, dimly-lighted picture gallery.

From its sides looked down upon him innumerable pictured ghosts, who, from their obscure corners, seemed to glower angrily at the usurping generations, who had thrust them thus coolly to the wall—or else gazed out with that weird glance of pictured eyes, turning and turning, seeming in their strange scrutiny to look beyond the body into the very soul. At the farther end of the long gallery were two doors, one leading to another suite of rooms, the other opening upon a winding staircase which was a private entrance to the chapel below. Sir Robert opened the latter of these, and descending the stairs, passed from the chapel into the open air. As the door was thrown back, a breath of the summer wind stole and lifted the great dusty banners hanging so mute in their old age, after a hot youth on well fought fields, then as if the place were uncanny for so free a spirit, it sighed itself away through the many crannies and crevices in the lozenge shaped panes.

In a lofty room commanding even a more extended prospect than that of Sir Robert, sat Mabel Sefton on a low couch almost oriental in its ease and beauty. This room had been chosen by the ladies for themselves, and remodeled in its adornments to suit their fancy. The heavy oak panellings and antique tapestry would have given it a sombre hue, but the addition of light, graceful drapery at an oriental window, couches of ruby velvet, flowers placed in the old sconces, music, embroidery and all the pretty nothings of girlish occupation and amusement, made them a necessary background to the picture. By the side of the fair Mabel, her fingers just parting the leaves, lay an old illuminated missal, its heavy bands and clasps of highly polished steel. She sat, perhaps, musing upon its contents, calm and pensive, looking the very genius of a summer day, dreamy and peaceful. A few low notes of music, the last strain of a *miserere*, issued from her parted lips, and lifting the book again, she resumed her reading of its pages. Soon there came another burst of mel- [illegible]

Shortly after, a servant entered, and acquainted the ladies that Sir Robert wished to speak with them on his return from the abbey, whither he had gone, and would wait on them there if agreeable.

"This seems to promise something," said Alice, after the servant had left the room. "My sage uncle may awake to a sense of his duties after all. Why do you not look delighted, Mabel? Think what might be if he but willed it—fetes and gala days all the year round."

"Can you desire this somuch—have we not always been very happy?" asked Mabel, looking at Alice.

"O yes, we have, but do not look so serious. You know that was all well enough for children, but for us—why we should be breaking new hearts every day."

"Say you so? Look well to your own, then; if hearts are broken, yours may be among the number."

"Never fear me. Mine must remain whole for many a long day yet."

Hearing Sir Robert approaching, Alice began mocking the look of quiet dignity with which Mabel waited to receive him, but seeing this troubled her, she quickly ceased, and sat watching the door demurely, as her uncle entered.

Sir Robert advanced towards the young ladies, who rose to meet him. Greeting them kindly, he seated himself near an antique table, and began conversing of the books thereon.

"O, those all belong to Mabel," said Alice, in reply to a question of Stafford. "That a Kempis is hers, and all the rest. My company is so poor she is obliged to call in the primitive fathers to supply the deficiency."

"Sir Robert will not believe that," answered Mabel, with a quiet smile.

A pause ensued, during which Stafford looked at each of the fair girls attentively for several minutes. Sir Robert broke the silence, by saying:

"I propose remaining at home during the summer, young ladies, and if it be your wish we will see as many of our friends and neighbors at Stafford House, as good Mrs. Bertram can accommodate."

"Dear uncle, you could not have made a happier suggestion. We two poor girls have been pining in solitude this many a year, and I can assure it is a great pity."

He looked at her with a grave smile, and asked:

"How much earlier than seventeen would my fair niece prefer entering society?"

"O this age does very well for me, but you forget poor Mabel, she is a whole year older than myself."

"Indeed! is she a whole year older?" and turning with a kindly inquiring expression, he asked, "Has Mabel then been so very lonely?"

"No, indeed, Sir Robert," she answered, earnestly. "I do not think I know how to be lonely."

"That is just what I mean," cried Alice. "She goes about the house quiet and sober as a dove who has lost its mate, not knowing what is the matter, while it is all for the want of amusement, or a sweetheart, to tease now and then. Now confess it, Mabel, is it not so?" and she looked at her in a pretty, beseeching way.

But Mabel turned away and made no reply, for she thought it useless.

Sir Robert listened for an answer, but none came, and although such a foolish remark needed none, yet he could not but wish she had said something.

"Well, my dear girls," he said, rising to go, "I will see in future that you are provided with suitable companions."

"You will soon be rewarded," exclaimed Alice, "by having both of us troublesome damsels off your hands, if my prophecies are worth anything."

Without replying to this sally, Sir Robert bowed and left the room.

"O Alice, how could you talk in such a manner! Sir Robert must think us so ungrateful for all his kindness, when in truth we have been so happy."

"Tut, tut, pretty Mabel, he does not care. Do you not suppose it will be a relief to have us provided with protectors without troubling him?"

Mabel sighed to herself, and began plucking to pieces the lilies and violets she had just arranged so carefully.

Sir Robert had consulted the lady abbess in regard to his wards, and was about to follow her advice in presenting them to the world.

It had been the wish of Alice's mother, that should her daughter show any inclination for the life of a cloister, it should be encouraged. On inquiring if his niece had shown any interest in a conventual life, that good lady could not but smile at the thought of the gay girl as a member of the sacred sisterhood, and assured him it was most unlikely she would ever seek it of her own free will, as a retired life would probably do her more harm than good. "But Mabel," she added, "my sweet Mabel, I hope one day to see her sheltered from the changes and deceits of the cold world within this quiet sanctuary. Happy those who can turn heavenward without waiting to be driven into the straight and narrow way by the world's hard blows."

All that Stafford saw of Mabel convinced him more fully, that should she pass a few years longer, and her heart remain untouched, it was very probable the abbess would be gratified by seeing her a dweller within those walls.

Three or four weeks had passed away and Stafford House was gay enough to suit even Alice. Among the many guests assembled were two of Sir Robert's more intimate friends, Sir Thomas Clifford, and Hubert Falconbridge.

The Lady Mabel was installed mistress of the house and ceremonies. She had insisted and urged the duty upon Alice, as by right belonging to her, but one might as well try to teach a butterfly mathematics. Mrs. Bertram the housekeeper fretted at her carelessness, the butler laughed, shook his head, and would go to the Lady Mabel for orders, when Stafford was away. The beggars at the gate received largess as gratefully from both, but if a tale of distress was to be told, or advice needed, they one and all waited patiently to get the ear of Mabel, sure she would neither forget nor neglect them.

Sir Robert seemed to enjoy the festivities of the place at first, and did much to enhance its pleasures by his generosity and well advised schemes. Oftimes would he find himself detaining Mabel at his side, watching the play of features in her upturned face, as she plead some boon for Alice, or asked his advice to their movements.

Hubert Falconbridge had been much with Mabel of late, greatly occupying her attention it seemed to Sir Robert. As for himself, these gayeties palled upon his taste, and for a few days he had been more than usually taciturn, absenting himself almost wholly from the animated party beneath his roof. Especially had his manner shown this change on the morning on which our story opens, when he, together with Sir Thomas Clifford and Hubert, discovered the rustic seat beneath the fairies' oak.

CHAPTER II.

Mabel Sefton stood on the same morning, by one of the long windows in the fine old library, which served as a breakfast room. Each guest had departed to his various pleasures and pastimes, and Mabel was left alone, musing upon the events of the past few weeks. Her brow was a little clouded; she feared in some way to have incurred her guardian's displeasure, as none of her efforts to dispel his gloom seemed at all successful; and at last she began to think the change must be in herself. He was always kind, she could not complain of any real omission or commission—yet how much more convincing is the kindness that is striving to hide a change; this Mabel felt keenly. There had been great satisfaction and assistance in consulting him upon each little plan, and he had given her every opportunity of so doing, until she wondered, he was so kind, why she had never known him so well before.

With a sigh she turned to the thought, whether it were best to consult him upon certain gayeties which were destined to take place within a few days. The birthday of Lady Alice was to come, and each had suggested for the day's amusement, his or her favorite pastime, but Alice had overruled them all, and insisted upon a grand trial of skill in archery, at which all who chose to enter the lists should compete for prizes. The old forester, who took special pride in this accomplishment of the young ladies, as he had taught them himself, was quite transported with delight at the decision, and at having all plans and arrangements put into his hands. True, it might all go on as well without the trouble of consulting Sir Robert, but might he not feel it a neglect on her part, changing so much from the usual custom? yet the idea of seeking him herself became more difficult every day.

Mabel had seen Clifford, Falconbridge and Stafford as they passed down the main avenue and turned off to the right in the direction of her favorite path nearly an hour before, and turning hastily from the window, she resolved to go out upon the terrace and speak to Sir Robert when he should return. Accordingly she left the room, and stepping out upon the massive flagging which ran through the green mound, she walked to and fro once or twice. Soon Stafford was seen returning alone, walking slowly up the avenue, dressed in a rich suit of maroon velvet, with no ornament save a jeweled sword. He did not raise his eyes on approaching, but kept carelessly tossing pebbles from the path with his riding whip. Ascending the steps, he would have entered the hall door, had not Mabel come forward timidly, and arrested his footsteps.

"I would speak with Sir Robert, if he will wait on me a few minutes."

"Certainly, my Lady Mabel, I am at your service," and a pleased smile lighted up Stafford's countenance as he joined her.

"Then you are not among the riders to Alnwick this morning?"

"No, they will set off in half an hour, and I had promised to meet the lady abbess early in the day, so I must e'en remain behind."

"It will be a merry party if my fair niece takes the lead. I saw her fully equipped an hour ago."

"Yes, I almost regret I cannot go, the country is so beautiful between this and Alnwick."

Mabel commenced at once telling Sir Robert why she had detained him—what they proposed doing, and concluded by asking "which part of the grounds he considered best for the archery meeting." She was nervously occupied all the while, turning a pretty ring of turquois and pearl upon her finger, and with eyes still fixed thereon, she awaited a reply. But Stafford was silent. Thinking he had not understood her inquiry, she commenced repeating it, when glancing upward, she met his eyes fixed upon her so earnestly, that blushing in spite of herself, she hesitated and came to a full stop.

Sir Robert, not appearing to notice her embarrassment, took the little hand which had been twirling the ring so industriously kindly within his own, and said:

"So Alice has a birthday this week, has she?"

"Yes, Sir Robert."

"Does not my little Mabel ever have birthdays also?"

Growing a trifle more dignified at that word little, she straightened her graceful figure to see that it came nearly up to his shoulder, and replied:

"O yes, surely, but—"

"But what?"

"I do not think much of my own."

"O you do not,"—stroking his moustache to hide a smile.

"I mean, to speak of it. The kind lady superior suggests to me many subjects for thought on those days, and if possible, I pass them in solitude, and you see," she added, with a convincing smile, "as no one else remembers them, it is all very well."

Stafford's face gained an additional shade of seriousness at this answer, and he pressed more closely the little hand still held within his own.

"Yet you are making fine preparations for the birthday of Mistress Alice."

"O, we all remember so well when hers is coming, it would be impossible to conceal it, and besides, she wishes to be so happy on that day."

Seeing Stafford still look grave, and fearing his newly pledged kindness might vanish, she hastened to say:

"I hope, Sir Robert, you will approve my arrangements. Although you had given us *carte blanche* for all our plans, still I was quite sure I ought to acquaint you of them," and she looked at him inquiringly.

"It was very proper, indeed, it was quite necessary. I approve entirely of everything."

"I thank you very much, Sir Robert," said Mabel, earnestly, and her gentle, grateful heart fluttered like a released bird at being quite sure her guardian was satisfied with her.

The spell being broken now, the happy maiden chatted away upon many a theme, her low silvery laughter chiming in right merrily. Well pleased at her side, stood the graceful, listening cavalier.

Time passed swifter than Mabel noted, and the fact was brought to her mind by the busy voices and footsteps which began to be heard from within, and the clatter of horses as they were led round to the entrance with other notes of preparation for the morning's excursion. Lady Alice's voice was heard exclaiming, "what can have become of Mabel?" and at the same moment she appeared in the doorway, accompanied by a group of beauteous dames, among whom none shone brighter than the lovely Alice.

"How now," she cried, espying Mabel and her uncle, who approached from the end of the terrace. "This augurs not well for poor me. Is a council being held? I get so much advice from you two separately, that I am in constant fear of your uniting forces."

At this moment Sir Thomas Clifford and Falconbridge were seen hastening up one of the paths, while at the same time several cavaliers issued booted and spurred from a side door, and joined the group already upon the terrace.

Lady Alice had seen Sir Thomas approaching, and with that spice of coquetry she possessed in common with all beauties, if not all women, she pretended she was not aware of his presence.

Turning to a gentleman she begged him to fasten the ruby clasp which had fallen from her gauntlet. He was only too happy to be so occupied, and while bending over her small finely shaped hand he could not help prolonging the operation to its utmost extent.

Alice chatted merrily as she listened to hear if Clifford was coming to her side. But he had stopped with Falconbridge, who had bounded up the steps on first seeing Mabel, and was now earnestly engaged talking with her.

Lady Alice drew away her hand almost petulantly when the gauntlet was secured, and looked around for Clifford. She caught his eye looking so composed, and yet as if he were laughing at her, that it only made her the more indignant. She thought he understood her, and so he did, yet loved her none the less for her witchery.

"A fine day, Lady Alice," said Sir Thomas, joining her.

She looked steadily in the opposite direction pretending not to hear.

"A fine breeze, Lady Alice."

With head still turned, she bit her lip and tried not to laugh.

"Good morrow, Lady Alice."

"By my faith, Sir Clifford," she said, laughing, in spite of herself, "your gallantry is matchless. Did you not know I could not hear you?"

"As well doubtless, as your ladyship—"

"I think we shall quarrel, Sir Thomas."

"I am wholly at your mercy," he answered, bowing courteously. "But here are the horses and see, they are nearly all mounted, shall we descend?"

Lady Alice was soon well seated and Clifford, vaulting into the saddle, was by her side in an instant, no one presuming to compete with him.

Falconbridge had been urging Mabel eagerly, but all in vain, to change her mind and accompany them to Alnwick. He at last begged the favor to ride with her to the abbey.

"O no, I could not think to deprive you of the pleasant company you will have in the gallop to the castle," answered Mabel.

"The Lady Mabel can deprive me of pleasure only by refusing my request."

This he spoke in a tone so low and earnest, that Mabel thought to accept the proffer carelessly as unimportant, were better than to persist in a refusal.

"In truth, Sir Hubert, if you are not going with these gay people, and care to accompany me, I do not object, but remember, you will have to wait a weary time at the abbey."

The permission was all Hubert wanted; he would willingly wait the year if there were need, and thanking Mabel, he went delightedly to order the horses. The cavalcade had just set off, and Mabel looked around to speak with Stafford ere he went, but he had disappeared. He had not spoken of going to Alnwick, yet she gazed eagerly back after the horsemen, only to see the last one just vanishing at a distant turn in the road. Mabel felt a kind of pleasure and exhilaration at being restored to her guardian's favor, which she had never felt before, and did not strive to account for—satisfied he was not about the place, she tripped gaily away through the great hall to her room, and soon came forth equipped for the ride. Hubert was already waiting, and in a few minutes they were on their way to the abbey.

Stafford had waited within the embrasure of a deep window, with some little anxiety it must be confessed, to see if Mabel would permit Sir Hubert to accompany her, and on seeing them set out, he turned away with a slight curl of the lip at his weakness in caring or fearing, and sought his own room.

It was quite late before the Lady Mabel and Falconbridge returned. Sir Robert looked up from the book he had in hand, as he heard the sound of horse-hoofs upon the gravel. Mabel's face was glowing with exercise—the light curls of her sunny hair fell with pretty grace from beneath a velvet cap, and were waved by the truant wind almost into the face of Hubert, as he bent forward to catch every word she uttered. They halted some minutes, Mabel talking the while very earnestly to Hubert, apparently finishing something which had been the topic of conversation.

"I cannot but agree with you in everything, my lady," were the words wafted to Stafford's ears, as Hubert, with a look of devotion, assisted Mabel to dismount.

Her guardian's face darkened into a frown as he gazed at the scene, and tossing his book aside with an exclamation of vexation, he started from his seat. A distant step was heard approaching—he paused, it was Hubert. The cheerful voice accosting a serving man on his way, that light, confident tread annoyed him, and with a varying expression of countenance, as if he distrusted himself, just as his visitor's hand was upon the handle of the door, Sir Robert withdrew into an inner room and turned the heavy bolt. Stafford felt his impatience to be unmanly, yet was too ill at ease to conquer it and meet Falconbridge as usual.

Until that morning Sir Robert had hardly understood his own feelings in regard to Mabel. That stern, cold man, who had borne the shock of conflict unflinchingly, now found sheltered beneath his own roof a little wild wood flower which had gone well nigh to unnerve him, ere he awoke to its power.

Stafford ran over in his mind very rapidly the events of the past few weeks, and felt an almost uncontrollable inclination to snatch the child, as he felt her to be, from the pursuit of any other, and make her his own. But the unusual passion passed away, and calmly he strove to view her interest in his pleasure as the natural result of an affectionate nature. Hubert loved her, probably she reciprocated it, and therefore her destiny was fixed.

On the night preceding Alice's birthday, the guests had all departed to their several rooms, and Mabel, under some pretence, remained behind in the great drawing-room, promising in a short time to join Alice. She was seated on a low stool amid a sheet of moonlight, which had flung itself across the floor, her head bent forward and resting upon the arm of a heavy oaken chair.

The last few days had been hurried away amid plans, costumes and arrangements. The only quiet moments which presented themselves were when she could steal away down the green lane to her favorite seat beneath the great oak, and now she wished to think. Some one had found out that the oak was her resort, and each morning of late was placed there a bunch of fresh dewy flowers, with the words, "For Mabel," written upon a slip of paper and placed among them.

She never met any one going thither or returning. It was a secluded spot, yet both Falconbridge and Clifford appeared to know, indeed they had spoken of the place. Of the two it must be Hubert, for the other gentlemen she supposed ignorant of her particular haunts. Yet this seemed not like Hubert, and the thought flashed into her mind, could it be Sir Robert? He did not appear to notice her enough of late for that. "He would not take so much pains for any lady, and he calls me a child," she mused, while a half sigh escaped her lips.

Sir Robert's uniform kindness since the morning of the Alnwick party, had not satisfied her as she supposed it would when troubled in consequence of his fancied displeasure. She would seek the lady mother, who had so often given her good and wise counsel, then she trusted the unquiet spirit would disappear. After a while peaceful thoughts stole into and soothed her mind, the discontent vanished.

After a short time Mabel became aware some person had entered the room. Supposing it to be a servant, or some one in search of an article left behind, she remained perfectly still in order to escape observation. Whoever it was, approached the place where she was sitting, then halted suddenly as if just observing there was some person in the room. Her head was bowed down as if sleeping; after listening for a moment the figure approached gently to Mabel's side and stopped. She did not look up—did not move. Presently a hand was placed upon the chair very near, and rested there. The moonbeams flashed brightly on a diamond ring on one of the fingers—steadily, clearly, like a star of promise, it remained unmoving. Mabel closed her eyes from that excess of light. She knew the ring, and whose the hand that wore it, yet it seemed half a dream—that still late hour, the motionless trees making great shadows on the lawn—no sound but the shrill cry of a distant night-bird, and that figure as motionless watching over her. A spell seemed gathering about her—she might have slept, and she might have dreamed, so strangely passed the time.

Then it seemed the figure was bending over her, the hand had moved from her side and was placed with the other gently upon her fair curls, while a whispered voice murmured "Heaven bless thee, Mabel, my Mabel." Then there were retreating footsteps and it was still again.

The young girl started to her feet, it had grown late, very late. The long stream of moonlight had changed its position and lighted a far distant corner.

She looked like a stray spirit flitting through the rooms and up the wide stair-case. A dark figure stood in the shadow, saw her regain her room, and then the echoing tread of footsteps was heard through the empty corridors which led in the direction of the chapel and gallery, until it died away in the eastern wing.

CHAPTER III.

Never a fairer morning dawned than that which Mistress Alice claimed as her natal day. A group of fair girls in their airy morning robes, began early besieging her door to gain entrance, and now with gay wishes, laughter and frolic, made the walls ring again.

Separated from Alice's chamber only by a dressing-room, Mabel was awakened by their many peals just as Alice came dancing into the room, the rest running to the door and peeping in, roguishly waiting to be invited.

"O thou blessed, quiet one," exclaimed Alice, throwing aside the rose-tinted curtains of Mabel's couch, and stooping to give her a warm kiss. Then piling the white drapery in fantastic form around her face, she laughingly called out:

"Come hither, my maidens, saw you ever such a tint on my rose-bud's cheek? She must have been dreaming of the fairies."

"Thou art fairy enough to make one dream," she answered, not without a blush though, for an unwonted gladness had flashed into her mind with the first waking consciousness, and there was a flush of joy upon her cheek which seemed the fulfilment of yester-night's blessing.

"If you bind me down thus with your white arms, I shall never be equipped for the wondrous doings of to-day."

"True, my Mabel, so speed thee in thy dressing. Look yonder, where waves our banner above the marquee between the trees. Good old Adam has surpassed himself. The green sward for the shooting ground is shaven so closely, it looks like velvet, and the trees have been beguiled to come and shade us in a wondrous manner."

"What have we here?" asked Alice, a short time after, as her waiting-maid came forward, bearing in each hand a small inlaid casket, which she had just taken from the hand of a serving-man at the door.

"From Sir Robert to the young ladies, and he wishes them a very happy day," said the woman, as she handed them, one to Alice and the other to Mabel. Lady Alice with eyes full of pleasure and curiosity, seized upon the silver key fastened to the side, and hurriedly threw open the case. Bright as drops of fire were the glowing rubies which met their eager gaze, set with small diamonds which showed to advantage their exquisite color. Nothing could be richer or more brilliant. Alice clasped the bracelets upon her finely turned arms and the necklace about her throat, where each seemed made to rest, so much did they enhance her glowing beauty.

After admiring them herself and being admired by all the rest, she turned abruptly to Mabel, who had sat quietly watching Alice, with her own casket resting on her lap unopened.

"Now darling, just unclasp your little hands, and let us see, have you no curiosity yourself?"

Mabel smiled, and yielded the box to Alice, who, kneeling by her side, quickly turned the lock.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed every one. Beautiful indeed. Resting upon their bed of white satin was a full set of pearls and emeralds, set in a manner novel as it was beautiful. The jewels resting on a network of gold which formed the different pieces, were made to represent bunches of lilies of the valley, pearls making the white drooping bells and the glittering emerald the long fern like leaf. Alice looked on a moment without speaking, then glancing up at Mabel whose eyes were half filled with tears, she said in a serious, convincing manner:

"Yes, my good uncle improves, he begins to appreciate my pet."

"What, crying? O, well, then," making a feint to take away the box, "I will tell him you do not wish them—they make you unhappy."

Mabel felt the kindness deeply. It was not her birthday, and even if it were, this beautiful and delicate gift, selected with a view to her taste, was an attention she could not have anticipated.

The jewels were at length put aside, as the place began to be astir, and every one was alive with enjoyment at Stafford House. Alice seemed to vie with Mabel in the kindly office of bringing together those who would be happiest in each other's company. As it was necessary for each lady formally to choose a knight who should be her armor-bearer for the day, many a damsel, without their delicate interference, would have had to choose the one whose name she could pronounce without a blush, and been too proportionately unhappy. The bright Alice was less the coquette too, to Sir Thomas, who had cleverly managed to select himself as her man-at-arms by seizing every arrow belonging to her early in the day. She had chosen Hubert too, for Mabel, and on seeing him watching her with rather a saddened countenance, she went to acquaint him of his good fortune, adding gaily, as she left, "faint heart never wins, let me tell thee that, Sir Hubert."

Passing in the direction of her uncle's rooms, she met him coming out. Greeting Sir Robert with a smile and half a sigh, she said:

"Now just please, uncle mine, condescend to our revels to-day—we want you to crown the victor. You may not have me another birthday."

"Shall I not have thee, dear Alice? I do not wish to lose my children."

"But you will have to I fear; you know," she answered archly, "I promised we should be taken off within the year."

"Then you are quite as happy as you look?" he asked, glancing inquiringly at his niece.

"Yes, dear uncle, quite, I assure you."

"I suppose, then, I should be satisfied."

"Indeed, you may. Mabel and I are happy as heart can wish, so rest you easy, uncle mine." Saying this she tossed towards him a wreath of white roses, begging him to seek Mabel and give it to her. "You will find her at the great oak; she went that way a while since with Falconbridge."

Stafford took the wreath and went in the direction of the library. Entering the hall he looked at the chaplet, while a half smile played over his features, then lifting it, he deposited it gently on the head of a Psyche that stood on a pedestal near the door.

Alice happening to remember it the next morning, wondered if Mabel received it; and the maid who removed its withered glories from the head of the statue, supposed it part of the floral decorations which had been distributed with no stinted hand.

The grounds of Stafford House presented a brilliant scene as the gay groups became more numerous, and parties from the neighboring country-seats were constantly arriving. Small white tents were scattered here and there among the trees, containing seats for shelter and repose. Above each of these fluttered in the breeze a flag bearing some quaint device.

Long tables shaded by canopies were spread with refreshments for the peasantry. Alice and Mabel after greeting all the strangers who were expected to arrive, withdrew, and seated themselves beneath a linden on one side of the enclosure reserved for the shooting ground, which they made their head-quarters.

Clifford and Falconbridge came up almost immediately, and Mabel's countenance fell a little as Sir Thomas acquainted them that Stafford had deputed him to crown the victorious lady.

"Yes," laughingly chimed in Falconbridge, "we have just left him conning the pages of a Plato, as coolly unconcerned as if there were nothing to tempt him beyond the walls, or away from that respectable ancient's musty philosophy."

All laughed at Hubert's raillery but Mabel, who pretended not to hear.

At the appointed signal the shooting commenced with spirit, while cheers announced the skill of each fair marksman. The Lady Alice and Clifford left their companions and stationed themselves at the proper place for careful observation. Mabel did not wish at once to mingle with the crowd, preferring to remain there where was an excellent view, until her turn came.

Hubert laid aside the light, springy bow and daintily tipped arrows destined for her use, and leaning himself against the tree, engaged in animated conversation. Mabel feeling it to be a sort of necessity for that day, received his attention with unusual ease and freedom. Thereupon Falconbridge, to whom success had never yet said nay, built a tower of hope wondrous high, and strove to fancy himself very near the cap-stone.

Soon a messenger came from Lady Alice, saying it was already her turn, and as Mabel would come directly after, she begged her to be in readiness. Hubert quickly gathered up the arrows, and accompanied her to where Alice and Sir Thomas were the centre of a merry crowd, near the well-dinted target.

It was the privilege of each person to let fly three arrows. When the Lady Alice's three had sped, and Mabel commenced, it was plainly seen that the greatest triumph of skill would lie between the two.

The first rivalled in precision the Lady Alice's best. The second hardly went as well, Mabel having just as she shook back her light curls, and steadied herself for an aim, caught sight of Stafford, who was standing with several other gentlemen, watching her. Blushing to think she should falter, Mabel quickly caught the remaining arrow from Hubert's hand, and placed it on the string. Drawing it up tightly, she was just about to launch it from the bow, when the arrow glanced aside and coming back with full force, struck Mabel violently in the throat.

Stafford saw it instantly, and gained the arena almost at one bound. It was too late. Hubert had caught her in his arms as she sallied back deadly pale, and the crowd parting on either side made way, as he bore his unconscious burden to the marquee beneath the linden. Alice was at her side in an instant, loosing her bodice, bathing her temples, and using every means to restore her. After a few minutes she partially recovered, and then relapsed into a deeper swoon.

Sir Robert had judged better than any one of the violence of the blow, and with a pang at seeing her borne away by Hubert, he did not follow, but despatched at once several serving men to the abbey for a leech. Yet he did not know the full extent of the injury, and pacing up and down the greensward, he anxiously awaited the news of her returning consciousness.

The look of stern anxiety with which Falconbridge had borne her from the ground, revealed most clearly to Sir Robert the hold the fair girl had upon the young knight's affection. This held him back as with an iron grasp. It was Hubert's privilege to be at her side, to watch and anticipate her wishes. The thought chafed his spirit, and he laid no claim to such patience as would enable him to be witness to this unmoved. In a few moments Sir Thomas Clifford was seen coming from the marquee with a countenance full of anxiety—he hurried towards Stafford, who joined him at once.

"You have some skill as a leech, Stafford," he hastily exclaimed. "I pray you come this way instantly."

Without stopping for a moment, they hastened towards the spot where Mabel was lying, cold and motionless. Sir Robert questioned no one, but thrusting them all aside, saw at a glance what was necessary to be done.

The swoon had been already fearfully protracted, and unless some blood were taken at once, the consequences might be disastrous. With one look at her pale face, Stafford drew from his breast a small, glittering dagger; as one rent he cut away the drapery from her arm, and with a steady hand thrust its point into one of the blue veins which showed so clearly through the skin.

Kneeling at her side, he gazed intently to see the first signs of returning life. The blood flowed slowly at first, then more rapidly, as the heart's beating quickened the returning tide, and began to show its color in her pallid lips.

Mabel gasped once or twice, and then half opened her eyes, but as if the effort were too much, she closed them again with a faint moan. Sir Robert piled the cushions which formed the couch, to make a more comfortable resting place, with all the tenderness and care of a woman, then lifting the soft, silken hair from about her neck, disclosed the wound made by the arrow, now beginning to bleed afresh. Alice shuddered at the sight, as she stooped to give her uncle a handkerchief to staunch the blood.

Every one remained silent, not offering a word of advice, so evident was it that Stafford understood the case, and was fully competent to take charge of the poor girl. Hubert, pale and anxious, had withdrawn to the farther end of the marquee, yet within sight, that the air might reach her unimpeded, watching the effects of Stafford's skill.

Ever prompt and thoughtful when called upon to act, Sir Robert on first seeing Mabel had ordered a litter from the house instantly, and the men were already waiting with it outside.

Mabel had not spoken, but the more peaceful breathing and returning color made him judge it safe to have her removed at once. This change had no bad effect, but a chill seemed to creep over her, and shuddering slightly, she murmured, faintly, "Cold, very cold." Alice took a large cashmere which Mrs. Bertram had the precaution to send out, and wrapped her carefully in it, while Stafford supported her tenderly in his strong arms, as if she were an infant. The litter was prepared, and he carried Mabel to where it stood. The fresh air revived her, and opening her eyes, she looked up with a bewildered expression, that changed into a faint smile as she met the anxious gaze of her guardian and Lady Alice.

On turning her head slightly, a look of pain passed over her features, and she again closed her eyes. Stafford would not trust the serving men to bear the litter on which Mabel was laid, and Hubert quickly sprang forward, with Sir Thomas Clifford and several others to assist him. He motioned all away but Falconbridge, to whom he assigned the foot, while with an expression of determination which seemed to say he had already neglected her too much, he maintained his position at the head. On arriving at the house, the surgeon who had arrived, seeing all was being properly done, waited until the patient could be carried to her room, before he attempted to examine the wound.

Mrs. Bertram led the way with Mabel's maid, whose eyes were red with crying, while Lady Alice followed them with a saddened countenance. The door of Mabel's room was thrown open, and Stafford, who had lifted her carefully from the litter, and up the staircase, entered, and placed her, weak and helpless, upon the bed.

The physician was at once in attendance, and Stafford turning to leave the room, with a last, anxious glance at Mabel, hastily whispered to him to send word immediately when he should ascertain the probable danger from the wound.

The principal part of the company disappeared from Stafford House on the event of Mabel's mishap. Clifford and Falconbridge yet lingered, feeling they had deeper interest there than others. Lady Alice, whose own acceptance Clifford had already gained, notwithstanding his entreaties, would not hear of his making a formal declaration to her uncle until Mabel were quite well.

The summer days sped along swiftly, and the fair girl was rapidly recovering from the prostration consequent upon her illness. Every day her guardian had been himself, morning and evening, to the door of her room, to inquire of the attendant how she was getting on, at the same time bearing faithfully every message with which Hubert might entrust him.

At last one evening she bade Alice say she should be down stairs again in one or two days at most. Alice gave her an affectionate caress, hoped she would do credit to her good nursing, and bounded away for the daily walk upon the terrace, which Mabel would never hear of her omitting.

Sir Thomas soon joined her. After a time she blushingly told him Mabel would be down now in a few days. Knowing he would seize upon this to obtain her permission to speak to Sir Robert, she talked away very hastily, not giving him time to utter a syllable. He succeeded in speaking, however, and after many a protest and demur, obtained her reluctant consent. Not that she did not love Sir Thomas, and with the earnestness, too, of first affection, which, however unwise it may be in many cases, is nevertheless, very sweet. But she was not one to say yes readily, and to yield up her much prized independence. After the final word was given, she laughingly told him she could not feel quite at ease until there was a good opportunity to disobey him.

Clifford resolved to speak to Sir Robert at once, as he intended afterwards leaving Stafford House for a short time, until he should return and claim its sole remaining daughter. This resolve he communicated to Falconbridge, who wished to govern his own movements in some degree by Clifford's. Hubert had had many an anxiety during Mabel's illness, with now and then a misgiving, but his own ardent love and hope buoyed him up, and he now resolved to ask Sir Robert's permission to gain the Lady Mabel's hand, and with this seek an auspicious moment to declare his love to the gentle girl herself.

The next morning Mabel was reclining upon a couch opposite one of the deep windows of their room, slightly pale, and looking more delicate from illness. The cool air of morning bearing on its wings the scent of wild flowers, stole in and ruffled the leaves of the book she was reading, and made her long for a walk through the leafy woods. Alice was flitting about the room intent on anything which required action.

A servant entered, bearing a note for Alice. Taking it from his hand, she looked at the writing outside, and coloring, walked soberly to a distant seat at the other end of the room. Mabel followed her with a look of inquiry. Opening the note, whose contents she more than guessed, she read as follows:

"DEAR ALICE:—Will you not come to me upon the terrace? I have but now left Sir Robert, and am impatient to see you. Do not delay, dearest. CLIFFORD."

[CONCLUDED ON NEXT PAGE.]

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE ROSE AND THORN.

BY MRS. M. W. CURTIS.

Away in a quiet valley,
  A crystal streamlet flows;
And the balmy air is laden
  With the perfume of the rose.

There bright-winged birds are singing,
  As carelessly and free
As though no angry storm-winds
  E'er sweep o'er hill and lea.

Away in the quiet valley,
  Where nature seemed so fair,
I gathered sweet wild roses,
  But deemed not thorns were there!

Earth hath its quiet valleys,
  And pleasures beaming fair;
But yet when plucked too lavish,
  We find that thorns are there.

Then let us seek the roses
  That bloom in yonder skies;
Where thorns and briers come not,
  And summer never dies.

Written for The Flag of our Union.

MABEL SEFTON:

—OR—

THE WARD AND GUARDIAN.

BY ADELAIDE HARRIS.

[CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 207.]

Alice rose from her seat, went hither and thither, busied herself about some trifles—fancied she must do something for Mabel—and on not being able any longer to deceive herself into the belief of being too much occupied to comply with Clifford's request, walked slowly towards the door. Forgetting until the handle was turned, that she had not noticed, or spoken to her companion, she turned back with a face so grave Mabel could not but wonder, though she forbore asking what had moved her so much. Hoping Alice might acquaint her with it on her return, she stood a moment looking out upon the deep green foliage of midsummer, then her eye caught the abbey turrets, and with a quiet smile she turned from the window, and taking up a well worn breviary, began reading its pages. Several hours passed away before Alice's return, and then her countenance, if not as serious as when she went away, was yet more subdued and thoughtful than was her wont.

Mabel had returned to her couch, and seeing that Alice noticed there were tears upon her cheek, she answered her inquiring glance.

"Our good lady abbess has been with me the last hour. She is so good and pure—when shall I be more like her?"

"Never, in heaven's name I hope it," answered Alice, hastily, with a gesture of impatience.

"Hush, Alice, do not speak so."

"Nay, but I shall; thou art too good for earth now, and we have been well nigh losing thee [illegible] satisfied and happy looking.

"I have somewhat to tell my bird;" and seating herself on a low cushion at Mabel's side, she told her, not without many a blush, and hiding her face on Mabel's neck, of Sir Thomas Clifford, his wooing, and earnest desire to gain her consent to his speaking to her uncle—that at last when Mabel said she was almost well, it had been given, and now he had seen him, and—and —Mabel might guess the rest.

"I guessed it long ago, darling?" she answered, caressingly. "So we are to have a Lady Clifford shortly, are we? how soon may the wedding be looked for, Alice dear?"

Alice at this question raised her head quickly with the old expression, and said, half petulantly:

"Soon,—any time. I do not care when. In truth, he made so much talk about the matter, I told him to have it all his own way."

"And that is—?"

"In three weeks," said Alice, dropping her voice, and turning away her head as she replied.

The young girls were both silent for several minutes, when Mabel murmured, gently:

"I hope you will be very happy, dear Alice. Sir Thomas hath a brave and loving heart, methinks."

"Ay, that be has," warmly answered Alice. "But,—I had well nigh forgotten." Turning towards her with an inquiring look. "Is he braver knight to your fancy than Hubert Falconbridge? I have somewhat to tell you of him."

"Of him!" echoed Mabel. "What of him?" while her look and tone betrayed the interest she felt.

"Ah, Mistress Mabel, I see now."

"Nay, Alice, you mistake me, yet I would know what of Sir Hubert."

Mabel spoke so seriously, Alice was constrained to answer her at once.

"Sir Thomas has but just now told me. Hubert desiring to win the hand of fair Mistress Sefton, and wishing to know something of his prospects, as he has not been able to learn it from her own lips, like a wise man sought the consent of her rightful guardian and protector, Sir Robert Stafford, as an earnest of future success with the lady herself."

"Has he spoken to Sir Robert?" asked Mabel, hurriedly.

"He has spoken, dearest."

"What said he? did he—tell me Alice—quickly," and the excited girl with lips apart, and flushed countenance, listened eagerly.

Alice laughed a low, quiet laugh to herself, Mabel was so earnest to learn of the matter.

"O, fear not, he has not said nay."

"Then he consents?" faltered Mabel.

"Ay; and Sir Thomas says he was wondrous gruff about it, too. Falconbridge being somewhat elated at his acceptance, began forthwith building air-castles in the future. 'But,' exclaimed my gracious uncle, 'Spare me your wooings, Master Hubert, I am not given to such fancies.' And then stalked away. Verily, methinks it would suit him to live in a world where women were not allowed."

Mabel gazed at her companion, bearing every word that was uttered, until she ceased. Then pressing her hands for a moment over her face, whence the unusual color had vanished quickly as it came, she lay quietly back upon the pillow from which she had arisen.

The sunset shadows were lengthening above the new mown grass, with which the air was redolent, as Alice stood wondering what spell had come over her gentle companion. Mabel had no thoughts which words could utter. A new revelation had unfolded itself to her mind, and wholly unheeded passed the hours as she revolved it again and again. Alice did not like to leave her alone, and begged her to go out then; she was sure it would do her good.

"Not to-day," briefly answered Mabel.

With this quietness of manner there was so much decision, that Alice deemed it useless to urge the point, yet she still lingered. As Sir Thomas was to leave Stafford House on the morrow, the young girl had so many busy thoughts of her own, that various speculations concerning Mabel were speedily put to flight. She was just about leaving the room, when to her surprise Mabel rose up hastily, and said, "Stay, I will go with you."

They were soon descending the stairs to the pleasant parlor which Mabel had not entered since the day of the fete. Clifford and Falconbridge were at the door as they entered, and with exclamations of pleasure and surprise, they led her to a seat. She glanced timidly about the room, but Stafford was absent.

Hubert seeing her look and divining the cause, immediately said, "Sir Robert rode away from the house an hour since at a desperate rate. He will not be pleased to have missed your first visit to us below." Very much at random were Mabel's answers to Falconbridge, who was ever at her side, and vainly she strove to forget this was the room where Stafford had blessed her, and called her his Mabel, where unconsciously she had dwelt so much on the delight of pleasing him. It was very cruel to know he could give her up so easily. She longed for Hubert to understand her feelings in regard to him, and a flash of almost hatred glanced into her mind, but was as quickly banished. It almost frightened the gentle girl, that view of the power one strong passion has to arouse its fellows. Secretly hoping, yet dreading Stafford's return, she sat almost silent, while an animated conversation was going on around her. At length becoming weary, she left the apartment and returned to her room.

A week or more had elapsed since the last event. Mabel was quite well now, and alone at Stafford House with Alice as in days gone by. On the next day after she had left her room for the first time, Sir Robert sent his regrets that he should not have seen her, and promising to be back in season for Alice's wedding, left the house an hour or two after Clifford and Falconbridge had taken their departure.

Hubert Falconbridge had not left Stafford House, however, without first requesting and obtaining an interview with Mabel. During this Stafford had stopped [illegible] Alice with his intentions.

Mabel gently, but in a firm manner, which left no hope of change, declined Hubert's proffered love, and determined so soon as the marriage of Alice had taken place, to make the neighboring abbey her place of abode. Alice knew all this, and said at last with a sorrowful smile, "If Mabel could not marry, it was perhaps as well for her to enter the convent, as it would not be pleasant to live there alone with her Uncle Stafford." And Mabel could not be persuaded to accompany her to her new home.

Thus time passed swiftly away, Alice having nothing to cloud her brow, or chill her affectionate heart, but the sight of Mabel's pensive countenance as she returned from her daily walks to the abbey. Mabel had chosen this path of duty long ago, and though since another light had shone into her heart, many of its charms vanished, yet she pursued the course without complaining.

At length the day arrived on which Alice was to leave her early home as the bride of Sir Thomas Clifford. Many guests, members of the different families, were already at the house. Clifford and the good bishop who was to perform the ceremony, together with many of Sir Robert Stafford's personal friends, had arrived. Yet still the knight himself came not. It was early morning, the air balmy and peaceful, while in the deepest glades of the park the sun had not yet dried away the sparkling dewdrops. Alice had chosen these hours for her marriage. It was such a time of beauty and gladness she loved to have nature sympathize in her joy.

Mabel, as she stood in her simple robe of white, with the jewels of pearl and emerald, Stafford's gift, looked, as Alice said, fit indeed to be a bride herself. She had just laid the folds of Alice's bridal veil, and was admiring the beautiful vision before her, when a servant announced that Sir Robert had but now arrived. It was just on the stroke of the appointed hour, and there being now no cause of delay, the party were soon assembled in the chapel of Stafford House.

The great doors were thrown open, admitting the golden sunlight which streamed along the vestibule, and through the windows of stained glass. The low altar was covered with a crimson cloth, upon which were strewn bunches of fragrant flowers, perfuming the chapel like a garden. Groups of fair ladies and brave men, the venerable bishop in full canonicals, and the good lady abbess, with several holy fathers, made up the company, who were waiting as the bridal party entered.

Stafford was also there, but at some distance from the others, and partially hidden from sight by the pillar against which he leaned, the heavy plume of his hat drooping so effectually as to conceal the stern expression of his countenance.

Mabel did not once raise her eyes from the marble pavement; not even when the ringing step of Sir Robert was heard, as he advanced to give away the bride. Only by a deepened flush on her cheek could the most curious discover that she felt any interest in the scene. The ceremony was concluded, and Sir Thomas proudly presented his beautiful wife to receive the congratulations of their numerous friends. Stafford gave one look at Mabel, around whom several young gallants were gathered, and then with folded arms remained moodily leaning against the heavy pillar.

A rosy faced monk standing by, who seemed to enjoy the scene vastly, ventured to suggest to Sir Robert that he would soon be obliged to resign the other of these fair girls to the destiny of her choice. If he had seen Stafford's look then, it might have silenced him, but being innocent of all harm, and hearing no reply, he continued, "Yonder cloister will contain no fairer flower than your youthful ward."

"What," thundered Stafford, as he turned and seized the amazed clerical by the shoulders, "what said you?"

"Your ward yonder," he meekly replied. "The abbess tells me she is soon to enter the cloister."

"Ah," breathed Stafford, while his countenance underwent an astonishing change, and releasing the startled monk, who gazed after him in silent wonder, he strode rapidly out of the chapel.

A thousand little circumstances gained new significance in Sir Robert's mind when he found that the abbey, and not the lover, was his rival. At one glance now he could see that Mabel received the attentions of Hubert, who was present, with little pleasure, and he could not but smile at himself for his wilful blindness.

"No, by the mass, good mother," he muttered, as the lady abbess drew Mabel aside for a word before leaving the house. "Thou shalt not succeed there to-morrow, unless thy tongue is wondrous eloquent."

The first moment Mabel could absent herself from the guests unnoticed, she left the house, for so brilliant and cheerful, its gayety wearied her. Stealing down the stone steps, she turned quickly into a by-path through the shrubbery, and sought the old seat beneath the oak.

It was still and peaceful; no sound disturbed the quiet of her favorite spot. Here she wished to try and gain that control over herself, which was necessary in order to see and speak to Stafford in her usual manner. She had not once spoken to him since the view gained of her own feelings on Sir Robert's acceptance of Hubert, and now she had but one aim, to preserve the secret.

Stafford imbibed a new spirit on learning that Mabel was nothing to Sir Hubert Falconbridge, and keeping an eye on her movements, had seen the little white slippers hurrying along the path, away from him, and he began to suspect. With that peculiar smile which sometimes lit up his features, he too descended the steps, and walked slowly in the same direction.

Mabel, poor child, trying to place her duty in so tempting a light as to hide all the sorrow from herself as well as others, resolved to bid at once a hurried farewell to haunts endeared by so many days of happiness. Lady Clifford and party would leave very soon, and Mabel intended to accompany them, although her own des-

While these thoughts were hurrying through the young girl's mind, a step was heard upon the gravel, and looking up quickly, she beheld Stafford. He approached her with a grave, serious countenance, seated himself upon the bench at her side, without uttering a syllable. Mabel felt the blood rush to her heart, and a strange, bewildering sensation fell upon her.

Nearly overpowered by emotion she had no skill to master, and fearing he might discover something of it, she arose hastily from the seat. But Stafford seeing the intention, detained the blushing girl, and compelling her agitated look to meet his, said, gently:

"Mabel, you have not asked if I approve your leaving my house for a nunnery—am I then of no importance in the case?"

Mabel cast down her eyes before his earnest gaze, but could make no reply.

"Are you very urgent to leave your home, or do you dislike the company? If so, I will soon be off again, and leave the place free to you."

She started, as he spoke of going, but he held more firmly in his grasp the hand by which he had detained her. There was a moment's silence, during which Sir Robert scanned well the speaking countenance of his youthful companion, then in a changed voice, which thrilled to the very heart of the young maiden, he said:

"Some weeks ago I left Stafford House, viewing you as the betrothed of Hubert Falconbridge, but I return to find the same Mabel, only in a great hurry to leave her guardian, and so shy of him withal, that he has to play the spy upon her actions to get speech of the lady."

The reproachful look and trembling lip arrested Sir Robert, and stealing his arm around the blushing girl, he whispered: "Mabel, dearest, stay with me, will you not?"

Turning her now tearful face towards him, he poured into her ear the story of his own deep love. Pillowing that youthful head upon his breast, he fervently exclaimed, as he clasped her to his heart, "Heaven bless thee, Mabel—my own Mabel."

A MODEL CERTIFICATE.

The following certificate outdoes the "Panaceas," "Syrups," and "Magnetic" nostrums which usually work such astonishing miracles in the way of cures upon conceited and credulous people:

"DEAR DOCTOR:—I will be 175 years old next October. For ninety-four years I have been an invalid, unable to move except when stirred with a lever; but a year ago last Thursday I heard of the Granicular Syrup. I bought a bottle, smelt of the cork, and found myself a new man. I can now run twelve and-a-half miles an hour, and throw nineteen double somersets without stopping.

P. S.—A little of your Alicumstoutum Salve applied to a wooden leg, reduced a compound fracture in fifteen minutes, and is now covering the limb with a fresh cuticle of white gum pine bark.—*Lawrence Sentinel.*

* * *

Covetous men are fools, miserable wretches, buzzards, madmen, who live by themselves, in perpetual slavery, fear, suspicion, sorrow, discontent, with more of gall than honey in their enjoyments; who are rather possessed by their money than possessors of it.—*Burton.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LINES FOR AN ALBUM.

BY JAMES D. ARMSTRONG.

While upon life's boisterous ocean,
Tossed about in wild commotion,
  To and fro,
May love, and hope, upon thee dawning,
As the bright and golden morning,
  Light bestow.

When by storms thy bark is driven,
And thy heart is well-nigh riven
  By despair,
May the holy light of evening
Whisper, in its gentlest breathing,
  God is there.

Then, when done with life's rough billows,
And thy form, beneath the willows
  Is at rest,—
While upon thee earth is closing,
May thy spirit be reposing
  With the blest.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

TAMING A TARTAR.

BY THE OLD 'UN.

To those acquainted with the method of dealing with refractory horses in the United States cavalry, it is unnecessary to state that it is quite summary; to those desirous of forming some idea of the process, the following sketch, on the authority of a dragoon officer, may prove acceptable.

In the summer of 183—, there was a slashing bay mare at West Point, known by the popular name of Fanny Kemble. She was a beautiful creature, but wild as the steed of Mazeppa, before that gentleman had taken his memorable lesson in horsemanship.

One day the mare ran away with an officer, threw him on a pile of rocks, and killed him on the spot. After performing this exploit she dashed fiercely down to the dragoon stables, her mane and bridle-rein flying loose, and her evil eye shooting forth baleful fire. The sergeant turned out the whole command, and ordered one of the men to catch the furious animal, mount her and see what he could make of her. The man sprang into the saddle, and rode her back to the plain, all eyes following their motions.

They saw the brute, after an angry toss of the head, thrust out her nose as she caught the bit in her teeth and rush away frantically to the edge of a steep bank, over which she pitched headlong, disappearing from view. In a minute more she was galloping back to the stables riderless, more frantic than ever. The dismounted dragoon soon made his appearance, limping along and covered with dust. Horse and rider had rolled over and over down a bank of sand and gravel thirty feet high.

The horse was again caught, and the men looked at each other, as if asking who was to [illegible] "critter" curiously, and she seemed by the devil in her eye to be perfectly aware of her power, and to defy completelp the skill and daring of the whole troop.

After a pause of a moment or two the sergeant spoke:

"Boys," said he, "it's my turn next. Hold on to her while I get ready."

He disappeared for a moment and then returned, his heels garnished with a pair of formidable spurs, the shanks four inches long and the rowels as large as a dollar. In his hand he bore a short, stout club, secured to his wrist by a becket. Thus "armed and equipped as the law directs," he prepared to try his hand—and heel— at "taming the Tartar."

"Boys," said he, "if this wild devil kills me, you must take her by files—she shall go through the troop before we give it up."

With these words he sprung into the saddle, and rode the beauty off. She went along with her little ears laid back, a demoniac gleam in her wild eyes, and shaking her head, as if she meant mischief. Her nervous, saucy, jerking step was also full of import. The sergeant sat upright without stirring in his saddle, resolute, wary and collected.

Two or three admonitory rough shakings and sudden side-long plunges having failed to disconcert the practised horseman, she tried a different game. Suddenly stopping, she reared high in the air, so high indeed, that if the sergeant had not been upon his guard, she would have fallen backwards. The moment her forefeet touched the ground, down came the sergeant's cudgel, right between her ears, with, as John Brougham says—a "most uncompromising whack," that felled the animal to the earth completely stunned. The sergeant kept his saddle, notwithstanding, and when recovering her senses, she rose furiously to her feet, he was "thar." Again she reared frantically, and again, as she descended, down came the merciless shillelah as uncompromisingly as before. This time she did not attempt to rise, but in furious and impotent rage, tore up the turf with her strong white teeth. But the sergeant pulled her up on her feet, and she dashed away with him.

He suffered her to approach within a few feet of the precipice down which she had plunged once before, and then, twisting her round with a strong hand, he gave her both spurs, savagely ripping up her flanks. With redoubled furious efforts she sought to disengage herself of her rider—but he was as firmly seated as the old man of the mountains on the shoulders of Sinbad the sailor. After this she obeyed his every command. She stopped when he ordered, advanced when he commanded; he rode her back to the stable and dismounted. Snapping his fingers he ordered her to follow—she followed like a dog, and from that day forward was as gentle as a lady's pet—thoroughly broken in one lesson! Of the gallant sergeant we can only say, as Cowper of John Gilpin,

> "And when he next doth ride abroad,
> May we be there to see."

Jester's Picnic.

"Where is your house?" asked a traveller in the depths of one of the "old solemn wildernesses" of the great West.

"House?—I aint got no house."

"Well, where do you live?"

"I live in the woods—sleep on the great Government Purchase, eat raw bear and wild turkey, and drink out of the Mississippi!"

And he added:—"It is getting too thick with folks about here. You're the second man I've seen within the last month, and I hear there's a whole family come in about fifty miles down the river. I'm going to put out into the woods again."

* * *

"Dear me, how fluidly he does talk!" said Mrs. Partington, recently, at a temperance lecture. "I am always rejoiced when he mounts the nostril, for his eloquence warms me in every nerve and cartridge of my body. Verdigrease itself couldn't be more smooth than his blessed tongue is;" and she wiped her spectacles with her cotton bandanna, and never took her eyes from the speaker during the whole hour he was on the stand.

* * *

Mr. Sereno H. Parry, of this city, showed us on Saturday, a chicken about a week old, which nature had endowed with a double apparatus for walking, or, in other words, a chicken with four legs. It seemed to derive very little advantage from the innovation upon the ordinary way of making up chickens, and we presume that the fashion will not be generally adopted by the Shanghais in this vicinity.—*Worcester Spy.*

* * *

To illustrate the beauties of the free banking system, a good story is told of a Michigan man who went to Indiana to buy a drove of horses. He was gone longer than he intended, and failed to meet a business engagement. He was reproached for his delay, and apologized for it on the ground "that at every little darned town they wanted him to stop, and be president of a bank!"

* * *

A clergyman at an afternoon service was asked to read a notice for a "Woman's Rights'" lecture. Whereupon he stretched out his hands, pronounced the benediction, then catching up a piece of paper, said he had forgotten to read the following notice:—"At half past six to-night, at the school-house in the first district, a *hen* will will attempt to *crow!*"

* * *

At a social party, says the Post, where humorous definitions was one of the games of the evening, the question was put "What is religion?" "Religion," replied one of the party, more famous as a man of business than as a man of wit—"religion is an insurance against fire in the next world, for which honesty is the best *policy.*"

* * *

The sheriff, who hung the murderer Clough, has received much praise from the corps reportorial of Massachusetts for the gentlemanly and dignified manner in which he performed that duty. The amiable official will, no doubt, reciprocate those kindly feelings, should any of these gentlemen require anything in his *line* of business.

* * *

If you want to astonish people, say little and look much. A "masterly" silence has been the making of many a man. There's Mr. Mumjum is accounted a tremendous philosopher, all because he keeps his tongue on the inside of his teeth; while Mr. Spreadum makes as great a fool, just for talking things right out on a four mile heat.

* * *

Ten tons of hog's hair was shipped a day or two since, on an Ohio river boat, for the East. The hoof is now, we believe, the only unavailable part of the swine, and it will not be a great while before it is put to some use; when it will be truly said of Americans, that their skill enables them to "go the *entire* swine!"

* * *

"In short—ladies and gentlemen," said an overpowered orator, "I can only say—I beg leave to add—I desire to assure you—that I wish I had a window in my bosom that you might see the emotion of my heart." (Vulgar boy from the gallery). "Wont a *pane* in your stomach do this time?"

* * *

"Sir," said a delinquent debtor, on meeting his creditor one day, "I was obliged to let that note lie over last week; I am very sorry for it—I wish I had the means of paying it—but I haven't; so I will do the best I can for you—*if my next child is a boy, I'll name him after you.*"

* * *

Hotels, down east, in the rural districts, are "some." Sheets serve for the bed and table, wash-bowls for soup and scrubbing, and combs for graters. They have ham and eggs for breakfast, eggs and ham for dinner, and ham and eggs for supper. Great parts, those.

* * *

Those people who send money to the newspaper office, with a request "to send the paper as long as the money lasts," are respectfully informed that, generally speaking, the money don't last long.

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